THE WORKS

Of the Learned

Iſaac Barrow, D.D.

Late Maſter of *Trinity Colledge* in *Cambridge.*

Publiſhed

By his Grace Dr. *JOHN TILLOTSON,*

Late Arch-Biſhop of *CANTERBURY.*

The Third Volume,

CONTAINING

Forty Five SERMONS, upon ſeveral Occaſions.

Completing His Engliſh WORKS.

The Third Edition Corrected.

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TO

Her Royal Highneſs

THE

PRINCESS

ANNE

OF

DENMARK,

THOMAS BARROW,

The Authour's Father,

Humbly Dedicateth theſe

SERMONS.

TO

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OF

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THOMAS BADLOE

The Author's Faith

Humbly Dedicateth this

SERMON

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Feb. 11. 168½. *C. Alston*, R. P. D. *Hen.* Episc. *Lond.* a Sacris.

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Of Doing all in the Name of Chriſt.

COLOSS. 3. 17.

And whatſoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus.

WHatſoever ye do in word, or deed: A Duty we ſee the Apoſtle injoyns us of a large extent, and therefore ſurely of a great Importance; indeed of an univerſal concernment; ſuch as muſt go along with, muſt run through all our Words and all our Actions. We are therefore much obliged, and much concerned to attend thereto, and to practiſe it carefully. But firſt we muſt underſtand what it is; the doing whereof depends upon underſtanding the ſenſe of that phraſe (*doing in the name of Jeſus*) being ſomewhat ambiguous, and capable of divers meanings; which both in common uſe, and in H. Scripture we find it to bear different, according to the variety of matters or occaſions to which it is applyed; moſt of which are comprehended, and (as it were) complicated in that general one, according to which we may be ſaid to do that in another perſon's name, which we do with any kind of reference or regard to him; ſuch as our relations, or our obligations to that perſon do require; and the particular nature of the action doth admit. And according to this acception I conceive it ſafeſt and beſt to interpret Saint *Paul*'s meaning here, ſuppoſing it to comprehend all the more ſpecial, and reſtrained meanings of this phraſe, truly applicable to the preſent matter; of which meanings I ſhall endeavour in order to propound the chief; and together, both to unfold and to inculcate the ſeveral reſpective branches of this duty. Yet firſt of all rejecting one or two, which cannot well be applied to this purpoſe.

To do in another's name, doth ſometimes denote the aſſuming another's Perſon, or pretending to be the ſame with him, the very He. So, *many ſhall come in my name*, (Propheſied our Saviour) *ſaying, I am Chriſt*: To do thus in *Jeſus* his Name, is the part of an Antichriſt, and an Impoſtor. That ſence therefore hath nothing to do here. Matt. 24. 5.

Again; to do in anothers Name, doth often imply doing *alterius loco*, or *vice*; in another's Name, or ſtead, as a deputy, or ſubſtitute; repreſenting the Perſon, or ſupplying the office of another. So did the Prophets

Jer. 7. 13. 26. 5. 14. 14. Jam. 5. 10. Jo. 5. 34. Matt. 10. 4. Ezr. 5. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Rom. 13. 4. Deut. 1. 17.

come, and speak in God's Name; what they declared, or injoined, being therefore said to be declared, and injoined by God himself: *I spake unto you, rising up early, and speaking (viz.* by the Prophets, whom he sent, and who are said to come and speak in his Name.) And thus the Apostles spake in *Christ*'s Name: *We are Ambassadours for Christ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled.* Thus also Princes govern, and Magistrates execute Justice in God's Name; whence they are stiled *Gods*, as being his Lieutenants, administring that Judgment, which belongs originally and principally to him. Now for this sense, neither is it so proper, or convenient here; it agreeing only to some particular Persons, and to some peculiar Actions of them; insomuch, that others presuming to act, according to that manner or kind, in *Jesus* his Name, shall thereby become usurpers and deceivers. We (and to us all this Precept is directed) shall heinously transgress our duty, doing any thing thus in his Name, without his Letters of Credence; without being specially called or sent; or being duly by him authorized thereto.

These, and such like senses the present matter doth not well admit; the rest that suit thereto I shall with some distinction in order represent.

I. To do in another's Name sometimes doth signify to do it out of affection or honour to another; for anothers sake, because we love, or esteem him; ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι being equivalent to ἕνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματος, and διὰ τὸ ὄνομα. Thus it is said, *Whosoever shall give you a cup of Water to drink in my name; because ye are Christ's* (is added by way of interpretation, that is, out of respect to *Christ*, because of your relation to him) *shall not lose his reward.* And thus surely we ought to do every thing in *Jesus* his Name; all our Actions ought to proceed from a Principle of grateful love, and reverence towards our gracious Redeemer. *Let all your Actions be done in Charity*, saith the *Apostle*; if in Charity to our Neighbour, then much more in love to him, for whose sake we are especially bound to love our Neighbour. Upon any undertaking, or applying our selves to action, we should so reflect thereupon as to consider, whether that we are going about be apt to please him, and conducible to his honour; if so, remembring what he hath done and suffered for us, (what excellent Blessings he hath purchased for us, what exceeding Benefits he hath conferr'd upon us) we should out of love and respect to him readily perform it; but if it otherwise appear displeasing, or dishonourable to him, we should, from the same Principles, carefully decline it. The duty is certain, and the reason thereof evident; for inducement to the practice thereof observe St. *Paul*'s example; who thus represents himself in the main imployment of his life, acting, *The love of Christ constrains us; judging this, that he died for all, that they who live might not live to themselves, but to him that died and rose for them*: The love of *Christ*, begot and maintained by a consideration of his great benefits conferr'd on him, was the spring that set St. *Paul* on work, that excited, and urged him forward to action. Thus doing, we shall do in *Jesus* his Name; but if we act out of love to our selves (to promote our own interests, to gratify our own desires, to procure Credit or Praise to our selves) we act onely in our own Names, and for our own sakes; not in the Name, or for the sake of *Jesus*.

Comp. Mark 9. 41. Matt. 10. 41. 24. 9. 19. 29. Matt. 18. 5.

1 Cor. 16. 14.

Φιλοτιμέμεθα εὐτῷ εἶναι. 1 Cor. 5. 9. 14.

1 Thes. 2. 6. Tit. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 2. Philip. 1. 15. Matt. 23. 5.

II. To do in another's Name implies doing (chiefly) for the interest, or advantage of another; upon another's behalf or accompt; as the servants, or factours of another. For, when the business is another's, and the fruit, or benefit emergent belong to another, he that prosecutes that business may well be, and is commonly supposed to act in that other's name. Thus our Saviour is in St. *John*'s Gospel expressed *to come, to speak,*

to

to act in God's Name; becauſe he did God's buſineſs (*the work which God gave him to accompliſh*) and entirely *ſought the glory of God*, as he there himſelf often avouches and profeſſes. And thus (in imitation of him) ought we alſo to do all things in his Name; remembring that we *are not our own Men, but the Servants of Jeſus*, (Servants to him not only by nature, as to our Maker and Preſerver; but by purchaſe, as to our Redeemer, who bought us with the greateſt Price; and by compact alſo, we having freely undertaken his Service, and expecting wages from him) that we have therefore no buſineſs or imployment properly our own, but that all our buſineſs is (or ſhould be) to ſerve him, and promote his glory; *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we ſhould do all to the glory of our Lord.* Whatever I ſay, we do, we therefore ſhould perform it with this formal reference, as it were, toward *Jeſus*, as his Servants, from conſcience of the duty we owe to him; with intention therein to ſerve him; in expectation of reward onely from him. So doth St. *Paul* (in proſecution of this ſame Precept) beneath in this *Chapter* injoyns us, that *whatever we do, we perform it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing* (or conſidering) *that from the Lord we ſhall receive the recompence of the inheritance; for that we ſerve the Lord Chriſt.* In like manner otherwhere he teaches us to do what we do *not as pleaſers of men* (not upon any inferiour accompts) *but as Servants of Chriſt, knowing and conſidering that we have a Maſter in Heaven.* But,

Joh. 7. 18. 8. 54. 10. 25. 5. 43. 36. 6. 28. 9. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 6. 19. 7. 23. Heb. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 18. Rom. 14. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Col. 3. 22, 23. Eph. 6. 6, 9.

II. Doing in another's Name imports frequently doing by the appointment and command, or by the commiſſion and authority of another. Ἐν ποίᾳ δυνάμει ἢ ἐν ποίῳ ὀνόματι, *By what power, and in what name have ye done theſe things*, ſay the High Prieſts to the Apoſtles? that is, Who did appoint or authorize you to do thus? their anſwer was ready; *In the Name of Jeſus*, who had ſent, commiſſionated, and commanded them to Preach, and propagate that Doctrine. And thus we are alſo bound to do all things in the Name of *Jeſus*, regulating all our actions by his Law; conforming our whole Lives to his Will; acting, not only out of good Principles (Principles of Love and Conſcience) but according to right Rules; the Rules of his Word and Example, which he hath declared, and preſcribed to us: for what is done beſide his Warrant and Will, cannot be rightly eſteemed done in his Name; will not as ſo be avowed, or accepted by him; no unjuſt or impious action will he upon any terms countenance or patronize. It was once a famous ſaying, *All Miſchief begins in nomine Domini*; and much ſurely, more than one way, hath been done under the like Notion or Pretence; but this will not ſerve to excuſe the doing of that, in the day of final reckoning for our actions. For, *there will be many* (we are taught) *that ſhall in that day by ſpecious profeſſions of having done this or that in Chriſt's Name*, veil their tranſgreſſions, and their neglects of duty, *ſaying, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy Name propheſied; and in thy Name caſt out devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful things?* who yet, our Lord himſelf aſſures us, ſhall have this reply made to them, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* There will be thoſe that ſhall claim acquaintance with *Chriſt* in ſuch terms: *Lord, we have eaten and drank before thee; and thou haſt taught in our Streets*; whom yet our Lord will diſclaim with a *Depart ye from me, all ye workers of iniquity*: 'Tis not, we ſee, Propheſying in *Chriſt*'s Name (or Preaching about him) nor frequent attendance upon thoſe who do ſo; nor ſpeaking much or hearing much concerning him; 'tis not having great gifts or endowments conferr'd by *Chriſt* (not even ſo great as that of working Miracles) 'tis not familiar converſe with *Chriſt*; or making frequent addreſſes to him,

Joh. 5. 36, 37, 43. 14. 54. 17. 18. Act. 4. 7. Luc. 24. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Theſſ. 3. 6. Joh. 16. 2. Matt. 7. 23. Luc. 13. 26.

that can ſanctify all a Man's actions, or ſo entitle them to the Name of *Chriſt*, as to ſecure his Perſon from being diſavowed and rejected by *Chriſt*; 'tis onely the conforming all our Actions to his holy Laws, that can aſſure us to be acknowledged and accepted by him. This I could wiſh they would conſider, who ſeem, by ſuch pretences, to commend, or excuſe their actions, although otherwiſe irregular and plainly contrary to the laws of *Chriſt*; ſuch as thoſe of being meek and charitable toward all Men; living peaceably our ſelves, and endeavouring to promote Peace among others; abſtaining from raſh and hard cenſures; from reviling and defaming others; paying reverence and obedience to Superiours; and the like Laws of Chriſt, not only expreſs and manifeſt, but even of the higheſt rank and conſequence among them; being mainly conducing to that which our Lord eſpecially tenders, the publick welfare and benefit of Mankind; the violation whereof cannot be juſtified by pretending any ſpecial regard whatever to *Chriſt*, or any collateral performance done, whether truly or ſeemingly, in his Name. We do but deceive our ſelves, if we conceit, that becauſe we think much, or ſpeak much of *Jeſus*; or have a zeal for ſomething good, all our actions are done in his Name; No; it only can be juſtly impreſſed upon, can warrant and ſanctify actions truly good and agreeable to his Law; it were an abuſe and forgery to do it, like ſtamping the Kings Name (or Image) on counterfeit metal; upon braſs or tin, inſtead of gold or ſilver. Good Intention and good Principles are indeed (as it were) the form and Soul of good Actions; but their being juſt and lawful are the body and matter of them; neceſſarily alſo concurring to their eſſence and integrity; they cannot ſubſiſt without it, but muſt paſs (as it were) for ghoſts and ſhadows. We are therefore concerned in all our doings to have an eſpecial regard to *Chriſt*'s Law as their rule; that will render them capable of *Chriſt*'s Name, and denominate them Chriſtian.

IV. Hereto we may add, that what we do in imitation of *Jeſus*, and in conformity to his Practice (that living rule and copy propoſed to us) we may be ſaid peculiarly to do in his Name. As a Picture uſeth to bear his Name, whom it was made to repreſent, and whom it reſembles; ſo if we ſet *Chriſt*'s Example before us, and endeavour to tranſcribe it; if our life in the principal lineaments of ſanctity and goodneſs do reſemble his holy life; they may well bear his Name. But if our practiſe be unlike and unſutable to his, we cannot affix his Name thereto without great preſumption and abuſe; ſuch as would be committed, if to a draught of foul hue, and ugly features, we ſhould attribute the Name of ſome moſt handſome and goodly Perſon, of high worth and quality. To do thus in *Jeſus* his Name (with ſuch a regard to him) is a duty often preſcribed unto us, not only as relating to ſome caſes and actions, (as when his Charity, his Patience, his Humility, his Meekneſs are ſignally commended to our imitation) but generally, *He, that ſaith he abideth in him, ought as he walked, ſo himſelf alſo to walk*; that is, whoever profeſſes himſelf a Chriſtian ought to conform the whole tenour of his Converſation to that of *Jeſus*; to endeavour in every imitable Perfection to reſemble him. So that whenever we undertake any action, we ſhould do well to look upon this Pattern, thus (as it were) examining and inquiring of our ſelves; What did my Maſter in this or the like caſe; do I do the ſame thing, do I act from the ſame Principles, do I proceed in the ſame manner as he did; am I herein his Diſciple and Follower? if ſo, in his Name let me go on chearfully, if not let me forbear. Doing this will not be only according to our duty, but an eſpecial help and furtherance of good practice.

Eph. 5. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 10. 1. Joh. 15. 12. 13. 34. Heb. 12. 2. Joh. 13. 15. Phil. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 Joh. 2. 6.

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V. To do in another's Name doth sometimes import doing by any power derived, or virtue imparted by another; for that a thing so done may be imputed, should be ascribed to that other. So, *Through thee* (saith the *Psalmist*) *will we push down our Enemies, in thy Name will we throw down those that hate us*, (through thee, and in thy Name signify the same thing.) So did the *Apostles* cast out Devils, and perform their other Miracles in *Jesus* his Name (διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος, *by his Name*, 'tis sometime expressed) that is by a divine virtue imparted from him. To this I add another acception, scarce different (at least as to our purpose) from that, according to which doing in another's Name signifies doing it in trust, or confidence reposed upon another, with expectation of aid, or hope of good success from another. So, *we rest on thee*, (said good King *Asa*) *and in thy name we go against this multitude*; in thy Name, that is, hoping for assistance and success from thee. And thus it is said, that *David went out* against *Goliah in the name of the Lord of hosts*; that is, confiding in God's help as his onely weapon and defence: Thus also did the H. *Apostles* work their Miracles in *Jesus* his Name; διὰ τῆς πίστεως τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ, *by faith in his Name*, (saith St. *Peter*) *his name hath made this Man strong*; that is, we did only trust in his divine Power, and it was that Power of his which restored that weak Person to his strength. And thus also it is our duty to do all things in our Saviours Name; with faith and hope in him; wholly relying upon him for direction and assistance; expecting from him only a blessing and happy issue of our undertakings. What we do in confidence of our own wisdom or ability; or in affiance upon the help of any other Person or thing, we do in our own Name, or in the Name of that thing (or that Person) in whom we so confide; to our selves, or to such auxiliaries we shall be ready to attribute the success, and to render the glory of the Performance; *glorying in our own arm*, and *sacrificing to our Net*. But what we undertake onely depending upon our Lord for ability, and success, may therefore bear his Name, because our faith derives the Power from him, which enables us happily to perform it; so that the performance may truly be attributed to him, and to him we shall be apt to ascribe it. And thus, I say, we are certainly obliged to do every thing in his Name; (in his Name alone;) retaining a constant sense both of our own infirmity, and of the impotency of all other created things; and consequently a total diffidence both in our selves, and in them; but reposing all our trust in the direction, and assistance of our All-wise, and All-mighty Lord; of *Jesus*, to *whom all power in heaven and earth is given*, (who indeed had it originally by Nature as God; but also farther hath acquired it by desert and purchase) into whose hands all things are given; and all things are put under his feet; who hath obtained this Power in design to use it for our good; and is thereby always ready to help us in our need, if we have recourse unto him, and rely upon him; making him what St. *Paul* stiles him, *Our hope*; our onely hope; renouncing all other confidences not subordinate to him. To do so is a duty evidently grounded as well upon the reason of the thing, as upon the will and command of God; to do otherwise is no less a palpable folly, than a manifest injury to God. For, in truth, neither have we, nor any other created thing any power, other than such as he is pleased freely to dispense; and which is not continually both for its being and its efficacy subject to him, so that he may at his pleasure subtract it, or obstruct its effect: *No King is saved by the multitude of an host*; *a mighty man is not delivered by much strength*; *a horse is a vain*

Ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Lxx. Psal. 44. 4. 89. 24. Matt. 7. 22. Mar. 9. 38. Act. 3. 6. 4. 10, 30. Joh. 17. 11. 2 Chro. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 17. 45. Act. 3. 16. Hab. 1. 16. Mat. 28. 18. Joh. 3. 35. 13. 3. 17. 2. Heb. 1. 2. 2. 8. Eph. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Phil. 2. 9. Apoc. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 1.

Eccl. 9. 11. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.*

By strength shall no man prevail. 1 Sam. 2. 9. Psal. 33. 17. 146. 3. 44. 3. Isa. 36. 6.

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thing for ſafety: Whence 'tis plain, that we cannot, upon any created power, ground a ſolid aſſurance of ſucceſs in any undertaking; it will be *leaning upon a broken reed* (which cannot ſupport us, and will pierce our hands) both a vain and a miſchievous confidence; that will abuſe us, bringing both diſappointment and guilt upon us; the guilt of wronging our Lord many wayes; by arrogating to our ſelves, or aſſigning to others what he only doth truly deſerve, and what peculiarly of right belongs to him; withdrawing the ſame from him; implying him unable or unwilling to aſſiſt us, and do us good; neglecting to uſe that ſtrength which he ſo dearly purchaſed and ſo graciouſly tenders; ſo diſappointing him, and defeating (as it were) his purpoſes of favour and mercy toward us. On the other ſide, truſting onely upon our Saviour, we act wiſely and juſtly; gratefully and officiouſly; for that in doing ſo, we build our hopes upon moſt ſure grounds; upon a wiſdom that cannot be deceived; upon a ſtrength that cannot be withſtood; upon a goodneſs that hath no limits; upon a fidelity that can never fail. For that we act with an humility, and ſobriety of mind ſutable to our condition, and to the reaſon of things; for that we thereby declare our good opinion of him as onely able, and very willing to do us good; for that we render him his juſt honour and due; we comply with his earneſt deſires, we promote his gracious deſigns of mercy and kindneſs toward us. Hence it is that every where in H. Scripture God ſo highly commends, ſo greatly encourages this duty of truſting alone in him; that he ſo ill reſents, and ſo ſtrongly deters from the breach or omiſſion thereof; *Thus ſaith the Lord, Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord; for he ſhall be like the heath in the deſart; and ſhall not ſee when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places in the wilderneſs; in a ſalt land and not inhabited. Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is; for he ſhall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that ſpreadeth out her roots by the river; and ſhall not ſee when heat cometh; but her leaf ſhall be green; and ſhall not be careful in the year of drought, neither ſhall ceaſe from yielding fruit*: thus in that place, thus in innumerable others we are threatened not onely with diſappointment, and bad ſucceſs in our undertakings, but with ſevere puniſhment, if we betake our ſelves to other ſuccours, and neglect or diſtruſt, or (in ſo doing) deſert God; but are encouraged, not only with aſſurance of proſperous ſucceſs, but of additional rewards, if intirely in our proceedings we depend upon and adhere to God. Thus we ſhould do in all (even our moſt common and ordinary) affairs, which no leſs than the reſt are ſubject to his power, and governed by his care. For you know how St. *James* doth reprehend it as a piece of naughty boaſting and arrogance, to ſay, *The morrow we will go to this City, and ſtay there a year, and trade and gain*; inſtead of ſaying, *if the Lord will, we will live, and do this or that*; that is, to reſolve upon, undertake, or proſecute any affair without ſubmiſſion to God's will, and dependance on his Providence: But eſpecially we ought, in matters and actions more ſpiritual, to practiſe this duty; for that to the performing of theſe, we have of our ſelves a peculiar impotence and unfitneſs; needing therefore a more ſpecial aſſiſtance from our Lord; that the ſucceſs of them more particularly depends upon him; that the glory of them in an eſpecial manner is appropriate, and (as it were) conſecrate to him.

Iſa. 43. 11. —— *Beſide me there is no Saviour.*
Hoſ. 13. 4, 10. Pſal. 106. 21.
Jer. 14. 8.

Pſal. 146. 5. 40. 4. 44. 6. 33. 18. 147. 11. 34. 22. 125. 1. 34. 22. 31. 19. 61. 4. 91. 4. 118. 8. 78. 22. 66. 2. 112. 7.

Iſa. 51. 5. 57. 13. 50. 7. 26. 3.
Jer. 14. 8.
Jer. 17. 5, 6, *&c.*

Matt. 10. 29, 30.
Jam. 4. 13.

If

If it be a folly and a crime, to think we can do any thing without God, 'tis much more so to think we can do any thing good without him; 'tis an arrogance, 'tis an idolatry, 'tis a sacriledge much more vain and wicked to do so. To imagine that we can, by the force of our own reason and resolution, atchieve any of those most high and hard enterprizes, to which, by the rules of vertue and piety we are engaged; that we can, by our own conduct and proweſs, encounter and withstand, defeat and vanquish those so crafty, so mighty enemies of our salvation (our own fleshly desires; the menaces and allurements of the World; the slights and powers of Darkness) is much a worse presumption, than in other affairs of greatest difficulty to expect success without the divine assistance and blessing; than in other most dangerous battels, to think we can, *by our own bow, and by our own spear save our selves*; that we can obtain victory otherwise, than from his hand and disposal, who is the Lord of Hosts. Reason tells us, and experience also shews, and our Saviour hath expresly said it, That (in these things) *without him* (without his especial influence and blessing) *we can do nothing*; he tells us, that we are but branches, inserted into him; so that, without continually drawing sap from him, we can have no life or vigour spiritual. The wisest and best of Men, have, by their practice, taught us to acknowledge so much; to depend wholly upon him, to ascribe all to him in this kind. *Why* (say St. *Peter* and St. *John*) *do ye wonder at this; or why gaze ye upon us, as if by our own power or piety, we had made this man walk?* —— *His name* (the name of *Jesus*) *through Faith in his name, hath made this man strong*: that acknowledgment indeed concerns a miraculous work; but spiritual works are in reality no less, they requiring as much or more of virtue supernatural, or the present interposition of God's hand to effect them; they make less shew without, but need as great efficacy within; so our Saviour, it seems, did imply, when he said, *He that believes in me, the works that I do he shall do, and greater works than these.* Every good and faithful Man doth not work Miracles, yet somewhat greater, it seems, by the grace of *Christ*, *he performs*: However, to these St. *Paul* referr'd, when he affirmed, *I can do all things in* Christ *that strengtheneth me*; nothing was so hard that he feared to attempt, that he despaired to master and go through with by the help of *Christ*; and, *Not* (saith he again) *that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God:* He was as sensible of his own inability, as he was confident in the gracious help of *Christ*. Thus should we do all things in the Name of *Jesus*; and 'tis not onely a duty to do it, but it may be a great encouragement to us, that we are capable of doing it; a great comfort to consider, that in all honest undertakings, we have so ready, and so sure an aid to second and further us in them; confiding in which, nothing is so difficult, but we may easily accomplish (*a grain of faith* will be able *to remove mountains*;) nothing is so hazardous, but we may safely venture on (*walking on the Sea, treading upon Serpents and scorpions*; daring *all the power of the enemy.*) In his Name we may, if our duty or good reason calls us forth (how small and weak soever, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or weapons offensive) naked and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out against the biggest, and best armed *Philistine*, nothing doubting of victory: Our weakness it self (if we be humbly conscious and sensible thereof) will be an advantage to us (as it was to St. *Paul*) to all effects and purposes, *the grace of our Lord will be sufficient for us*, if we apply it, and trust therein. But farther,

Οὐτε γὰρ ἀνθρώπου τι ἀνευ τῆς ἐκεῖ τὰ θεῖα συναναφορᾶς δυνατὸν κατορθῶσαι. Ant. 3. 13.

Pſal. 44. 6.

Joh. 15. 5.

Act. 3. 12, 16.

Joh. 14. 12.

Phil. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Οὐκοῦν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν. Mat. 17. 20. 21. 21. Luk. 17. 6. Matt. 14. 29. Luk. 10. 19.

2 Cor. 9. 21.

VI. To

VI. To do in another's Name may denote, to do it with such regard to another, that we acknowledge (that, I say, we heartily and thankfully acknowledge) our hope of prospering in what we do; our expectation of acceptance, favour, or reward to be grounded on him; that they are procured by his merits and means, are bestowed only for his sake. Thus
Joh. 14. 13. 15. 16. 16. 23, 24. our Saviour bids us to *offer our prayers in his name*; that is, representing unto God his meritorious performances in our behalf, as the ground of our access to God, of our hope to obtain from him what we request. So also
Eph. 5. 20. 3. 21. we are injoined to *give thanks in his name*; that is, with perswasion and acknowledgment, that only in respect to him we become capable to receive, or enjoy any good thing; that in effect, all the blessings by divine mercy vouchsafed us have been procured by him for us, are through him conveyed unto us. And thus also we should do all things in the name of *Jesus*, offering all our deeds to God, as sacrifices and services unworthy of acceptance, both in themselves, and as proceeding from us; but pleasing, and acceptable to God onely for his sake. We should do well, upon all occasions, to remember our natural condition, and the general state of mankind; such as it was before he did undertake, such as it would have
Rom. 3. 23. 11. 32. Gal. 3. 22. continued still, had he not undertaken for it; That our race had forfeited, and was fallen from God's favour; having injured him beyond all power of making him any reparation or satisfaction; that thence it was secluded from all means and hopes apparent of happiness, was exposed and tended downright unto misery; that we consequently had no ground to hope, that God (from whom no less in mind and in deed, than by reason of our guilt and state of condemnation we were estranged) would, in kindness, bestow any good upon us, or from us accept favourably any thing we should do. But that, by our Saviour's performances, the case is altered; He, by his entire obedience, having so pleased God, by his patient submission to God's will, having so appeased his anger, and satisfi'd his justice, that God is not only reconciled, but hath an especial favour, bears an earnest good-will toward us. That now the good things we possess, we may truly esteem as blessings, and enjoy them with real comfort, as pro-
Acts 3. 46. ceeding from mercy and kindness; now what we honestly endeavour, we may hope shall please God; now we have a free access to God, and may
Eph. 2. 17. 3. 12. chearfully present our sacrifices of duty and devotion, with a full persw-
Ἐν πεποιθήσει. sion that they shall be accepted. But all this happiness, all these favours and priviledges, we must alwaies remember to come from the con-
Eph. 1. 6. tinued procurement and mediation of the *Beloved*; so as ever to be ready to acknowledge it, and to return our thanks therefore. To this sense that our *Apostle* here had an especial regard, the words immediately following imply —— *Doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him*; that is, in all things we do, taking occasion to render thanks to God, as for his sake being merciful and bountiful to us; bestowing upon us the good we enjoy, blessing our endeavours, accepting our performances. We must not conceit, that any regard, any mercy, any favour, any reward is due to us in equity, is in effect conferr'd upon us upon our personal score (for, how mean things are we in comparison of his greatness; how vile and filthy things must we appear to his most pure, and all-discerning eyes; how unworthy of his regard and of his affection must we needs take our selves to be, if we do but well consider, and are acquainted with our selves?) But that *in him* (*i. e.* for his sake, and
Eph. 1. 3, 6. by his means) *God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*, in him ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς, *God hath favoured*, and cast his Grace upon *us*; valuing us notwithstanding all our imperfections; loving us notwithstanding the spots with which

which we are defiled; notwithstanding all the offences we have committed; for the relation and alliance we have to *Jesus*. Nor must we look on our services (the best we are able to perform) as in themselves grateful or satisfactory: For all of them, if we mark them well, we shall find not only quite *unprofitable to God*, but very defective in many respects; for, Who can say, he performs any thing both in kind, in manner, in degree throughly right and good; with that ardency of love he owes to God, with that purity of intention, with that earnest vigour of spirit, with that undistractedness of mind, with which he should perform it? No; in all our flock we cannot pick out a sacrifice entire and unblemished; such as God requires, such as duty exacts of us. They need therefore (all our services need) to be commended and compleated by the beloved Son his perfectly well-pleasing performances; they need to be cleansed and hallowed, by passing through the hands of our most Holy and undefiled high-Priest: to become sweet and savoury (or to receive that ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας, which St. *Paul* speaks of) from being offered up *in his censer*. In fine all our actions should, in our intention, be works of religion dedicated to God's service and honour; sacrifices, as it were, of gratitude and homage to God; so they ought all to be offered up in the Name of *Jesus*. I add farther,

Heb. 7. 26. Eph. 5. 2. Rev. 8. 3, 5.

VII. Lastly, that we do in the Name of *Jesus*, may well imply doing with invocation of him: thus we may understand that place of St. *James*, where the Elders are advised *to pray, and anoint the sick in the Lord's name*; for, to anoint them, imploring our Lord's blessing upon them, and upon those means used for their cure. And thus St. *Chrysostome* expounds the words; do all in *Jesus* his Name, *that is* saith he, *imploring him for your helper in all things; always first praying to him, undertake your business*. Doing thus, will indeed Christen, and consecrate our actions; for *all things* (saith our *Apostle*) *are sanctified by the word of God, and prayer*; that is, by God's blessing implored, and obtained by prayer; or, if God's word be there taken for his law, or revealed will, it is there signified, that our actions are not only sanctified by their lawfulness, or conformity to that good rule, Gods declared will; but also by the invocation of his name; however, all our actions, it seems, are unhallowed and profane, if not accompanied with devotion. That to do thus is our duty, appears by those frequent injunctions, to *pray indesinently*, to *pray always*, to *abide instantly in prayer*; which do not onely import, that we should pray often, and continue with Patience, and earnestness in Prayer; but that we should annex it to, or interpose it among all our actions, undertaking nothing (at least of consideration or moment) without it. We should do it (our *Saviour* commands) ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, that is, *on every occasion*; and Saint *Paul* gives the same direction, *Praying*, says he, ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, *on all opportunities, with all prayer and supplication in spirit*; (in spirit, that is, I take it, * *in our hearts* at least, and with secret elevations of our mind, if not with our mouth and voice.) And (more explicitely otherwhere saith he) *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing* (in all your affairs) *by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God*. And thus to do (to accompany all our undertakings with Prayer) we are indeed concern'd upon many accompts. We need God's direction (being our selves very blind and ignorant)

In locum.
Αὐτὸν καλῶν βοηθὸν, ἐπὶ πάντων φέρτερον αὐτῷ ἐγχείρει· ἀπὸ τῶν πραγμάτων.

1 Tim. 4. 5.

Δεῖ πάσης τῆς πράξεως προοιμίων τῶν προσευχῶν. M. Erem.

Μηδὲν μήτε ποιῶμεν μήτε λέγωμεν πρὸ ἢ τὸν θεὸν καλέσαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι συνεφάπτεσθαι ἡμῖν εἰς εὐχὴν ἡμῶν ἀπάντων. Chryl.

Τοῦτο δὴ πάντες ὅσοι καὶ κατ' ἐρασὴν σωφροσύνης μετέχουσιν ὅλῃ πάσῃ ὁρμῇ καὶ σμικρῷ καὶ μεγάλῳ πράγματι τὸν θεὸν δεῖ πρὸ καλεῖν. Plato. Tim.

Vid. Epist. 8. Arr. Epict. 11. 18.
1 Thes. 5. 17. Luk. 18. 1.
Rom. 12. 12. Colos. 4. 2.

Εκτενῶς.

Luk. 11. 36.
Eph. 6. 18.
* Eph. 5. 19.
Ἐν καρδίᾳ.
Phil. 4. 6, 7.

Ἐν παντὶ.
Bene ac sapienter majores instituerunt, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a precationibus caperetur; quod nihil rite, nihilque providenter homines sine Deorum immortalium ope, consilio, honore auspicarentur. Plin. *in Panez.*

in the choice of what we attempt; that our ends and designs may be good; conducible to God's honour and our own true advantage. For, as the Prophet tells us, *The way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his steps*; And, as the Wise man adds, *Man's goings are of the Lord, how then can a man understand his own way?* (implying, since God only knows what is best for us, that we of our selves without his direction, know not what to do, whether to go:) The H. *Psalmist* signifies the same in those words (very encouraging to the practice of this duty) *What man is he that feareth the Lord?* (that feareth him, that is, who worshippeth him, and seeketh his guidance) *him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse.* We need also (being our selves not onely weak and infirm, but inconstant and unstable) Gods assistance, and upholding hand in the pursuance of our well-chosen designs (that we may use the best means, and proceed in a streight course; that we may persist upright and steady in our Proceedings) that which the *Wise man* seems to call, the establishing of our thoughts, and promises, as a consequence, upon our seeking God's assistance in our actions, and relying thereon; *Commit*, saith he, *thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established*; (thou shalt drive on thy good purposes steadily, without stumbling or falling; at least irrecoverably. So the *Psalmist* assures us concerning a good man: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; none of his steps shall slide; though he fall he shall not utterly be cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* We also farther, as to the final success of our affairs, stand in need of Gods blessing; that he, upon whose will altogether depends the disposal of all events, should bestow a good issue unto our endeavours, that they prove not matter of discouragement, or discomfort to us; that which also the *Psalmist* assures us of obtaining, upon condition of our imploring and depending upon God for it; *Commit thy way* (saith he) *unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* We do thus need in all our affairs, the direction, assistance and blessing of our Lord; but shall not have them without Prayer; for, the rule is, *Ask and have, seek and find*; without asking we are not likely to obtain those gifts; without seeking we must not hope to find those benefits from God. If we are so proud, as to think we do not need them, or so negligent, as not to mind them; or so distrustful of the divine power or goodness, that we imagine he cannot or will not afford them to us; we are like to be so unhappy as to want them. God expects from us, that we should, in whatever we do, acknowledge him; ('tis the *Wise man*'s expression, *In all thy waies acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*;) acknowledge him as the only faithful guide and comsellour; as the only sufficient helper and protectour; as the only free arbitratour and donour of good success. Nothing therefore is well done, which is not thus done; we cannot be satisfied in what we do; we cannot hope for a comfortable end thereof; we cannot expect a blessing from God, if we have refused, or if we have neglected the recommending our proceedings to his care. We can, I say, do nothing; not eat, not sleep, not trade, not travel, not study with any true content, any reasonable security, any satisfactory hope, if we have not first humbly implored God's favour; committing our selves, and our business into his hand, that hand which dispenseth all good, which alone can keep off all danger and mischief from us. *God shall send his Angel before thee*: so did our Father *Abraham* send his servant about his business; having questionless be-

Job 18. 7. Isa. 30. 1. Hos. 10. 6. Prov. 1. 25, 30. Psal. 106. 13. 16. 7. 73. 24. 107. 11.

Jer. 10. 23.

Prov. 20. 24. 16. 9.

Psal. 25. 12, 9.

Prov. 16. 9.

Psal. 37. 23, 24. 17. 31.

Psal. 37. 5. 119. 5. 133.

Luke 11. 9, 10. Joh. 14. 13. Psal. 9. 10.

Gen. 23. 7.

fore commended it to God by Prayer. *God Almighty give you mercy before the man*: so did *Jacob* give his sons their dispatches toward *Ægypt*: In such a manner did we enter upon all our affairs, we could not but be full of hope, and void of care concerning them; for that commonly we are so full of anxiety about the event of what we undertake, whence doth it arise, but from a neglect of this duty? for, having committed our business into so sure a hand, how could we farther be solicitous about it? Had we, according to St. *Peter*'s advice, *Cast our care upon the Lord*; or, *cast our burden upon him* (as the *Psalmist* exhorts us) had we duly sought and invoked him, who *never faileth them that seek him*, who *is nigh to all them that call upon him*; we should not have such a load of troublesome care resting upon us; our hearts would be light, and free as to all these things; we should be secure, that nothing very bad, or disastrous, could befal us; we should experience it true, what the Prophet affirms in that Prayer or *Psalm* to God; *Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee*: *Be careful for nothing*, Saint *Paul* bids us, *but in every thing let your requests be made known to God*; if we perform the latter part, the former will naturally be consequent thereon. Thus, in the last place, should we do all things in the name of *Jesus* (upon all occasions praying to him, or which is all one, to God in his name) which that we may do, (that we are allowed and encouraged to do it) is also a privilege, and an advantage unvaluable.

Gen. 43. 14.
1 Pet. 5. 7.
Psal. 55. 22.
Psal. 9. 10. *Old Transl.* 70. 4.
Psal. 145. 18.
Psal. 112. 7, 8.
Isa. 26. 3.
Phil. 4. 6, 7.

In so many ways and particular respects may we, and ought we to perform all we do in the name of *Jesus*: We should do every thing out of grateful affection and respect to him, as our chief Principle; every thing as his servants, aiming especially at the pleasing of him and promoting his honour, as our principal end; every thing according to his will and commandment, as our constant rule; every thing after his example, as our best pattern; every thing, in confidence of his gracious assistance and blessing, as our onely strength and support; every thing with hope of acceptance purely upon his accompt; every thing with thankful sense and acknowledgment to God for the mercies and favours conveyed unto us by his means, conferred upon us for his sake; every thing with humble invocation of him, or with prayer to God in his name: In sum, every thing with a due and proper regard had to him; so that he be not passed over or left out in any thing we undertake; but come always into consideration, according as our relations to him, and our obligations to him do require. In the performances of which duties the life indeed of our religion (of all our good practise, of all our devotion) doth consist.

To all this I shall only subjoin the mention of one general duty, implied in all and each of those we have propounded, which is this;

VIII. That our Lord *Jesus* should be frequently (and in a manner continually; always, as to the habitual disposition of our souls, actually upon all fit occasions) present to our minds and thoughts. This, I say, is plainly implied in the former duties. For, how is it possible we should perform all our actions (yea, utter all our words) with any sort of regard to him, if we seldom think of him? Such is the nimbleness and activity of our minds, that it is feasible enough to do thus; and, in respect to other objects, we commonly experience it done; for *animus est ubi amat*; what ever we affect, our mind, however otherwise imployed, will be thinking on it, 'tis hard to restrain our thoughts from it; (the covetous man's heart will be among his bags; the voluptuous man's mind will be in his dishes; the studious Person will be musing on his notions, do he what he can.) Why then may we not as well, as often direct

our minds toward our Lord, and mix the remembrance of him with all other imployments or entertainments of our thoughts? to do so is surely very requisite, and very expedient toward our good practice. Things far distant, or long absent, can have small efficacy, or influence; 'tis so we see in natural, and 'tis no less so in moral causalities; wherein representation to the fancy and memory have a force answerable to that, which real conjunction and approximation have in nature. As the heat and light of the Sun, the farther he goes, and the longer he stays from us, do the more (proportionably) decrease; so according to our less frequently, and less seriously thinking upon any object, our affection and our respect thereto decay. If therefore we desire, according to our duty, to maintain in our hearts such dispositions (due affection and due reverence) toward *Jesus*; if we intend to suit our actions accordingly with due regard to him; we should, in order to those purposes, apply this so necessary and useful mean, of frequently bending our minds toward him; the doing of which in likelihood, will conduce much to the sanctifying our affections, and to the governing our actions in a constant performance of our duty. For we can hardly sure (admitting we do seriously believe him to be such as we profess to believe him) with any competent attention think of him; but that thought will be apt to restrain us from doing ill, to incite us to do well; since together with that thought, some of his excellent Perfections, some of our principal relations, and some of our great obligations to him (each of which hath much vertue and force to those purposes) will interpose and represent themselves. Frequently thinking of him, we shall sometimes apprehend him with incessant toil, labouring in the service of God, and in promoting the welfare of men; sometime we shall imagine him undergoing all kind of contumelies and bitter pains; suffering by the cruel hands and tongues of spiteful men; we shall (as it were) behold him bleeding under the scourge, and hanging upon the cross for our sakes. Sometimes he will appear to our minds crowned with Majesty, reigning in Sovereign Power and glory, having all things in subjection under his feet; sometimes also he will be represented as our Judge, before whose tribunal we must all shortly stand, and be obliged to render an accompt of all our doings; which thoughts passing through our minds, will be apt to make some impression upon our hearts, to have some influence upon our actions. For, can that most amiable and most venerable *Idea* of a Person so entirely pure and holy, so meek and humble, so full of benignity and charity toward all men (particularly towards our selves) be otherwise then apt to forget some especial love and reverence toward him; than incline us strongly to do well, yea than teach us what and how we should do so, in conformity to such a Pattern set before us? it occurring to our thoughts, that he is our Lord and Master (who made us and maintains us, who purchased us to himself, and redeemed us from miserable slavery by his own heart-blood) how can it fail to raise in us some awe, some sence of duty toward him? Will not the apprehension of what he did and what he suffered for us powerfully mind us, that according to all justice and equity, in all ingenuity and gratitude we are bound to do only that which will please him? If we think of *Jesus*, when we are setting upon any action, shall we not thereupon be apt thus to interrogate our selves? Shall I do otherwise than he did, or would have done, so rendring my self unlike, or contrary to him? Shall I be so unfaithful to my glorious Master, as to disserve him, or to neglect his service? Shall I be so unworthy toward my gracious Redeemer, my best Friend, my most bountiful Benefactour, as to disoblige him, to wrong him, to dishonour him, to grieve him

Act. 10. 38.

him by thus doing? Shall I be so vain and rash as to cross him who is my King, able to controll and subdue me; as to offend him who is my Judge, resolved to condemn and punish me? Shall I wilfully forfeit that friendship and favour of his, upon which all my happiness doth depend? Shall I procure his displeasure and enmity, from which my utter ruin must inevitably follow? Such considerations have a natural connexion with our frequent thinking upon, and the Presence (as it were) of our Blessed Saviour to our minds, which therefore may be commended to us as an excellent instrument of bettering our hearts and our lives.

To conclude; Let us all alwayes remember, and consider, that we are Christians, related unto *Christ Jesus*, and called by his name, and as so, in his name, let us do all things.

Lord of all power and might; who art the Authour and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ *our Lord.*

SERMON II.

Of Being Imitatours of Christ.

1 COR. 4. 16.

I beseech you be followers of me: or, I exhort you be imitatours of me.

Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε.

SAint *Paul* by an impartial reflexion upon his heart and life being well assured, that he by the divine Spirit was enlightened with a certain knowledge of all necessary truth, and endued with plentiful measures of divine grace; being conscious of a sincere zeal in himself to honour God and benefit men; being satisfi'd, that with integrity he did suit his conversation to the dictates of a good conscience, to the sure rule of God's Law, and to the perfect example of his Lord; that his intentions were pure and right; his actions warrantable, and the tenour of his life conspicuously blameless, doth, upon all occasions (not out of any self-conceitedness, arrogance, or ostentation, from which he, by frequent acknowledgment of his own defects and his miscarriages, and by ascribing all the good he had, or did, to the grace and mercy of God, doth sufficiently clear himself; but from an earnest desire to glorify God, and edifie his disciples) describe, and set forth his own Practice, proposing it as a Rule, pressing it upon them as an argument, an encouragement, an obligation to the performance of several duties. So by it he directeth and urgeth the *Ephesians* to a charitable compliance, or complaisance; a sweet and inoffensive demeanour toward other: *Give no offence* (saith he) *neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many,* 1 Cor. 4. 32, &c. 10. 1.

that

that they may be saved; *be ye followers of me* : so he guides and provokes the *Philippians* to endeavours of proficiency in grace, and the study of
Phil. 3. 16,17. Christian Perfection : *Nevertheless* (saith he to them) *whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing* : *brethren, be followers together with me, and mark such as walk so, as ye have us for an example.* By the like instance and argument, he moveth the *Thessalonians* to a sober and orderly conversation, to industry in their calling,
2 Thess. 3. 7. to self-denyal, and a generous disregard of private interest : *For your selves* (saith he) *know how ye ought to follow us*; *for we behaved not our selves disorderly among you*; *neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labours and travail day and night, that we might not be chargeable to any of you*; *not because we have not power, but to make our selves an example to you to follow us* : The same Persons he commendeth, as having by this
1 Thess. 1. 5. means been induced to a patient constancy in faith and good works : *Ye know* (saith he) *what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction* : The practice of all virtue and goodness, he also thus recom-
Phil. 4. 8, 9. mendeth under this rule and obligation : *Those things, which ye have learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do, and the God of Peace shall be with you.* Thus in our Text, (referring it to the context) he urgeth the Christians, his disciples at *Corinth*, to fidelity and diligence in the charges and affairs committed to them, to humility, patience and charity; wherein he declareth himself to have set before them an evident and exact Pattern. Which Practice of Saint *Paul* doth chiefly teach us two things: That we be careful to give; and that we be ready to follow good example: the latter of which duties more directly and immediately agreeth to the intent of this place; and it therefore I shall only now insist upon : the subject and scope of my discourse shall be to shew, that it is our duty and concernment to regard the Practices of good men, and to follow their example. To which purpose we may observe.

I. That it is the manner of the *Apostles*, upon all occasions, to inculJam. 5. 10. cate this duty : we heard St. *Paul* : hear St. *James* : *Take* (saith he) *my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an exJam. 5. 11. ample of suffering affliction* : *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord*; *that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*;
Heb. 6. 11. and the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* : *We desire* (saith he) *that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end*; *that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the proHeb. 12. 1. mises* : and again; *Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so eas-*
1 Pet. 3. 1, 6. *ily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* And St. *Peter* : *Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands*; *even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* And wherever the eminent deeds of holy men are mentioned, it is done with an intimation at least, or tacite supposition, that we are obliged to follow their example.

II. We may consider that to this end (that we might have worthy Patterns to imitate) the goodness of God hath raised up in all ages such excellent Persons, furnishing them with rare endowments, and with continual influences of his grace assisting them, to this purpose, that they might not onely instruct us with wholesome doctrine, but lead us also by good example in the Paths of righteousness. For certainly what St. *Paul* saith concerning the sins and punishments of bad men, is no less appli-
1 Cor. 10. 11. cable to the vertuous deeds and happy examples of good men : *All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

III. *They*

III. *They are written for our admonition*; It was a special design of God's Providence in recording and recommending to our regard the divine histories: They were not framed as monuments of a fruitless memory and fame to them; they were not proposed to us as entertainments of our curiosity, as objects of wonder, as matters of idle discourse; that unconcernedly we should gaze upon them, or talk about them; as Children look on fine Gays; but they are set before us, as copies to transcribe; as lights to guide us in our way to happiness: So that if we will not ingratefully frustrate the intentions of Divine Providence for our good, we must dispose our selves to imitate those illustrious Paterns of Vertue and Piety.

Μεγίστη δὲ ὁδὸς πρὸς τὸ τῶ καθήκοντος εὕρεσιν καὶ μελέτην τῶν θειοπνεύστων γεγραφῶν ἐν ταύταις δὴ καὶ αἱ τῶν πραξέων ὑποθῆκαι εὑρίσκονται, καὶ οἱ βίοι τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν ἀναγεγραπται παραδεδομένοι οἷον εἰκόνες πνεῦ ἐμψυχοι τῆς κατ' ἀρετὴν πολιτείας, τῷ μιμήματι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων πρόκειται. Bas. ad Greg. Ep. 2.

IV. We may farther consider that in the nature of the thing it self good example is of singular advantage to us, as being apt to have a mighty virtue, efficacy and influence upon our practice: which consideration should much ingage us to regard it, applying it as an instrument of making our selves good, and consequently of becoming happy. Good example is, as I say, of exceeding advantage to practice upon many accounts.

1. Examples do more compendiously, easily and pleasantly inform our minds, and direct our practice, than precepts, or any other way or instrument of discipline. Precepts are delivered in an universal and abstracted manner, naked, and void of all circumstantial attire, without any intervention, assistance, or suffrage of sense; and consequently can have no vehement operation upon the fancy, and soon do fly the memory; like flashes of lightening, too subtile to make any great impression, or to leave any remarkable footsteps, upon what they encounter; they must be expressed in nice terms, and digested in exact method; they are various; and in many disjointed pieces conspire to make up an entire body of direction; they do also admit of divers cases, and require many exceptions, or restrictions which to apprehend distinctly, and retain long in memory, needs a tedious labour, and continual attention of mind, together with a piercing and steady judgment: But good example with less trouble, more speed, and greater efficacy causes us to comprehend the business, representing it like a Picture exposed to sense, having the Parts orderly disposed, and completely united, suitably cloathed and dressed up in its circumstances; contained in a narrow compass, and perceptible by one glance, so easily insinuating it self into the fancy, and durably resting therein: In it you see at once described the thing done, the quality of the actour, the manner of doing, the minute seasons, measures and adjuncts of the action; with all which you might not perhaps by numerous rules be acquainted; and this is the most facile, familiar and delightful way of instruction, which is by experience, history and observation of sensible events. A systeme of Precepts, though exquisitely compacted, is in comparison but a *Skeleton*, a dry, meagre, lifeless bulk, exhibiting nothing of person, place, time, manner, degree, wherein chiefly the flesh and blood, the colours and graces, the life and soul of things do consist; whereby they please, affect, and move us: But example imparts thereto a goodly corpulency, a life, a motion, renders it conspicuous, specious and active, transforming its notional universality into the reality of singular subsistence. This discourse is verified by various experience; for we find all Masters of Art and Science explicating, illustrating and confirming their general Rules and Precepts by particular examples: *Mathematicians* demonstrate

monstrate their *Theorems* by *Schemes* and *Diagrams*, which in effect are but sensible instances; *Oratours* back their *Enthymemes* (or rational Argumentations) with *Inductions* (or singular Examples;) *Philosophers* alledge the Practice of *Socrates*, *Zeno*, and the like Persons of famous Wisdom and Vertue to authorize their doctrine: *Politicks* and civil Prudence is more easily and sweetly drawn out of good history, than out of Books *de Republica*. *Artificers* describe *Models*, and set Paterns before their Disciples, with greater success, than if they should deliver accurate Rules and Precepts to them: For who would not more readily learn to build by viewing carefully the Parts and Frame of a well contrived structure, than by a studious enquiry into the rules of *Architecture*; or to *draw* by setting a good Picture before him, than by merely speculating upon the laws of *Perspective*; or to write fairly and expeditely by imitating one good copy, than by hearkening to a thousand oral Prescriptions; the understanding of which, and faculty of applying them to practice, may prove more difficult, and tedious, than the whole practice it self as directed by a copy? Neither is the case much different in Moral concernments; one good example may represent more fully, and clearly to us the nature of a vertue, than any verbose description thereof can do: in sooner time, and with greater ease we may learn our duty by regarding the deportment of some excellent Person, than by attending to many Philosophical discourses concerning it: for instance, if we desire to know what Faith is, and how we should rely upon the Divine Providence, let us propose to our consideration the practice of *Abraham*; wherein we may see the Father of the Faithful leaving a most pleasant countrey, the place of his nativity, and questionless most dear unto him under that notion; deserting his home and fixed habitation, his estate and patrimony; his kindred and acquaintance, to wander he knew not where in unknown Lands, with all his Family, leading an uncertain and ambulatory life in Tents, sojourning and shifting among strange People, devoid of Piety and Civility (among *Canaanites* and *Egyptians*) upon a bare confidence in the Divine Protection and Guidance: we may see him Aged 99 years, sensible of his own natural impotence, and an equal incapacity in his Consort as to such purposes, yet with a steady belief assuring himself, that from those dead stocks a numerous Progeny should spring, and that he who by all Power of Nature was unable to beget one Child, should by virtue of God's Omnipotent Word become the Father of a mighty Nation: We may see him upon the first summons of the Divine Command without scruple or hesitancy, readily and chearfully yeilding up his onely Son (the sole ground of his hope and prop of his Family, to whose very Person the promise of multiplication was affixed) to be sacrificed and slain; not objecting to his own reason the palpable inconsistency of counsels so repugnant; nor anxiously labouring to reconcile the seeming contrariety between the Divine Promises and Commands; but resolved as it were (with an implicit Faith in God) to believe things incredible, and to rely upon events impossible; contemplating these things let us say what Discourse could so livelily describe the nature of true Faith, as this illustrious Precedent doth.

Xen. Apomn. 4.
It was Xenoph. *observation, grounded upon his own Experience that the memory of* Socrates's *Converſation did greatly profit his Acquaintance* (τὸ μεμνῆσθαι μὴ παρόν] ⊙ ἐ μικρὰ ὠφελεῖ τὺς ἐωθότας αὐτῷ συνεῖναι) *and* Seneca *ſaith, that the Crowd of Philoſophers, which followed the ſame Wiſe-man derived more of their* Ethicks *from his manners than his words* (plus ex moribus, quam ex verbis Socratis traxit) *Sen.* Ep. 11. *And he that ſhall reflect upon the Story concerning his behaviour, when he was by malicious envy perſecuted to death, may perhaps be more edified thereby, than by all his ſubtile diſcourſes about death, and the Souls ſtate after it.*

Again, he that would learn how to demean himself in resisting the assaults of temptation, let him consider that one carriage of *Joseph*; of him, toge-

together withstanding the courtships of an attractive beauty, and rejecting the solicitations of an imperious Mistress, advantaged by opportunities of privacy and solitude; when the refusal was attended with extream danger, and all the mischiefs which the disdain of a furious lust disappointed, of an outragious jealousie provoked, of a loving Master's confidence abused, could produce; and all this by one of meanest condition in a strange Place, where no intercession, favour, or patronage of friends could be had, no equal examination of his cause might be expected; of him doing this, merely upon Principles of Conscience, and out of fear of God; (saying, *How can I do this great evil and sin against God?*) and he that considers this example, how can he be ignorant of his duty in the like case?

Again, would we learn wisdom, constancy and resolution in the conduct of honest, and worthy designs, let us set before our eyes the Pattern of *Moses?* and therein take notice, how he obeying divine instinct and direction, having embraced that noble Purpose of rescuing his Countrymen from the *Egyptian* Bondage, of settling them in a method of happy Policy, and in bringing them into the promised Land of their enjoyment, did behave himself in the execution thereof; with how indefatigable industry he solicited their cause with a fickle, and deceitful, stupid, and hard-hearted King; enduring frequent disappointments and repulses, together with furious storms of anger, and most terrible menaces from him: how having there surmounted all obstacles, and effectually enlarged the People from their restraint in *Egypt*, he led them on foot through a valley, encompassed with mountains of Sea; and after that, undertook a tedious march (a march of 40 Years) through a wild, barren, and dry solitude, (where no water was, but such as issued from the stony bowels of a rock; no food or means of subsistence, but such as was supplyed by the miraculous purveyance of Heaven) in the mean while resisting the continual invasions of open enemies, in great numbers with armed violence striving to obstruct his passage, and defeat his purpose; having also (which was more) his Patience constantly exercised in supporting the froward perverseness of a most incredulous, and intractable People, which took all occasions of complaint and mutiny against him; in contesting with the factious rivality of envious Nobles, who repined at his successes, and maligned his authority among them; in bearing the indiscreet and untoward prevarications of his own most intimate friends and neareſt relations, complying with the wicked humours and desires of the People; in sustaining many other Perplexities and Crosses; all which notwithstanding he with insuperable resolution happily atchieved his glorious undertaking; and will not this example, attentively regarded, beyond the power of any other means or method, explain to us the way of industry, courage and perseverance in good and worthy, though high and difficult enterprizes?

One instance more, and that of all most pertinent to our occasion, Would you be instructed, how faithfully to discharge the ministerial, or any other office? With a stedfast attention then behold the excellent Pattern of St. *Paul*; consider how in all his designs he zealously and singly aimed at the honour and service of God, neglecting his own safety, quiet, credit, and all worldly accommodations for the advancement of them. How affectionately he tendred the good and welfare of those, the care of whose spiritual condition was commended to him, using all his skill, care and strength in promoting their edification; declaring himself for their good to be content, not onely for a time to be absent from the Lord, being deprived of that happiness which he otherwise impatiently groaned for, and was fully assured of; but desirous, as it seems, to be secluded for

ever from his blissful presence by a dreadful *Anathema*, for their sake. How prudently, meekly and humbly he demeaned himself toward them; becoming all things to all men, forming himself into all allowable shapes and colours; undergoing all sorts of censure and imputations (of a despicable, an ignorant, a foolish Person) tempering his speech and deportment to their capacities and needs, bearing their miscarriages, and complying with their weaknesses; parting freely with his own just liberty, pleasure and satisfaction, for their spiritual advantage. How generously he despised his own profit and ease, refusing that supply he might with all reason and equity have required from them; chusing to maintain himself with the labour of his own hands, and the sweat of his brows, that he might render the Gospel no-wise burdensome, or offensive to them. How vigilantly and couragiously he withstood the mischievous endeavours of false Brethren, and treacherous Seducers; earnestly contending for the Churches peace and quiet against factious spirits, and for the substantial truths of the Gospel against the pernicious devices of Hereticks and false Teachers. How patiently he sustained all manner of Pains, Griefs, Travels, Wants, Losses, Hazards, Distresses, Disappointments, Affronts and Reproaches for the Honour of God, the benefit of his spiritual Children, the discharge of his Duty, and satisfaction of his Conscience: These things, I say, regard, and then tell me, if he might not reasonably inculcate this admonition, *Imitate me*; and if his example be not of rare use to instruct us, how faithfully we should in our respective charges and employments demean our selves. I might in like manner instance how excellent a rule of Devotion the practice of the Royal Prophet may be unto us; how *Elias* his practice might teach us to be zealous Champions for truth and righteousness; how they who would be good Judges, or honest Patriots may receive direction from the carriage of *Samuel*, *Daniel* and *Nehemiah*. But I proceed to say that farther,

Ὑπομονῆς ἐν διδασκαλῳ δεῖγμα ὁ τῆς μακαρίας Ἰὼβ βίος· ἀνεξικακίας ὁ τῆς Μωσέως, πραότητος ὁ τῆς Δαβὶδ, &c. Chrys. T. V. 656.

II. Good Examples do not only inform; but they perswade and incline our reason to good practice, commending it to us by plausible authority: a way of reasoning the most plain, easie and suitable to all mens capacities; less subject to errour and doubt, than any other in particular cases; whereby as it is always more easie to know what is good and fit, so commonly it is most safe: there being few who can so well discern what is good, as they may rest in the judgments of others. For that wise and vertuous Persons do any thing, is a very probable argument, that we are obliged, and concerned to do the like; seeing such Persons may in all their actions be supposed to have an unbiassed regard to the rules of truth and justice. He therefore who can say, that *Abraham*, or *David*, or St. *Paul*, did so in such a case, supposeth that he hath no small reason to do the like; it is accounted pardonable, yea almost commendable, to err with such Persons; because it is done with good appearance of reason, seeing such Persons were themselves unlikely to err: *Will you* (saith *Cicero*) *commemorate to me* Scipio's, *and* Cato's, *and* Lælius's, *and say they did the same thing; though the thing displeases me, yet I cannot withstand the authority of such men: Their authority is so great, that it can cover even the suspicion of a fault.* 'Tis obvious in temporal concernments, how great a stroak this way of discourse hath; how boldly men adventure their dearest interests in following such, whom they probably deem honest, and able to guide them; For Instance, in travelling, if one being ignorant or doubtful of his way happen to meet a Person, whom he conceives able, and no-wise concerned, or disposed to mislead him,

Africanos mihi, & Catones, & Lelios commemorabis, & eos fecisse idem dices, quamvis res mihi non placeat, tamen contra hominum authoritatem probare non potuero. Magna est hominum authoritas, & etiam tanta, ut delicti suspicionem tegere possit. Cic. *in* Verr. 3.

him, he without scruple follows him, and confidently relies on his direction: In like manner, all good men in the way of vertuous practice tending directly toward happiness (our common journies end;) it being their design, their interest, and their endeavour not to mistake the way, not to defect from the right and neareſt course thereto, men are apt to think it reasonable, and safe to accompany, in their Progress, or to press after them in their steps: and surely, next to a clear, and certain rule, there is not any more rational warrant for Practice, and consequently no better inducement thereto, than such good Precedents. Farther,

III. Examples do incite our Passions, and impel them to the performance of duty. They raise hope, they enflame courage, they provoke emulation, they urge upon modesty, they awaken curiosity, they affect fancy; they set in motion all the springs of Activity. It may not be amiss to shew how, particularly,

1. They raise hope, by discovering to us and assuredly proving the feasibleness of matters propounded, or the possibility of success in undertaking good designs, and that by the best and most convincing of arguments, experience. Nothing so depresseth hope, and advanceth despondency as an apprehension of impossibility, or which is equivalent thereto, an extream difficulty (appearing to surmount our present forces) in the business to be attempted: of such a conceit desperation seemeth a reasonable consequence. For ἦν ἀδυνάτων ἐρᾶσθαι μανικόν, 'tis *a madness to aim at impossibilities*; and such considering the great infirmity of humane nature, its strong propensions to evil, and averseness from good, together with the manifold impediments, and allurements objecting themselves in the way of good practice, all duties as barely represented in Precepts, and pressed by rational inducements might seem to be, if good example did not clearly demonstrate them to be possible, yea sometimes facile; even those, which upon a superficial view do seem most difficult, and insuperable by our weak endeavour. The *Stoical* Doctrine, which described a fine and stately Portraicture of vertue; and inculcated very strict rules (a close following of God and nature, a perfect victory over self, the subduing all Passions and over-ruling all corporeal Appetites; an entire freedom, composure and tranquillity of Mind; a total indifferency in respect of Fortune, and all external events; with the like duties, rarely practised, although upon all accounts acknowledged conformable to reason) was therefore by most rejected as useless, or exploded as ridiculous, as being presumed to propound matters purely imaginary and unpracticable, yet he that had seen this doctrine in great measure exemplified by *Zeno*, the first Master of it, would have had no such reason to contemn it, nor to despair of practising according to it, if he would seriously endeavour it: exemplified, I say, by *Zeno*, whereof we have an illustrious testimony from a solemn decree of the *Athenians*: ἐπειδὴ Ζήνων Μνασέου, &c. Laert. *in* Zen. *Whereas* Zeno *the Son of* Mnaseas *the Cittican, having many years professed Philosophy in this City, and as well in all other things hath demeaned himself like a good man, as particularly exhorting the young men, who went to be instructed by him, hath provoked them to vertue, and sobriety; withal exhibiting his own life a pattern of the best things answerable to the discourses he used to make; it is therefore auspiciously decreed by the people, that* Zeno *the Son of* Mnaseas *be solemnly praised and crowned (according to the usage) with a golden crown; and that a monument be erected for him at the publick charge in the* Ceramicum (the Place where those were interr'd, who had bravely exposed their lives for publick defence.) This was indeed a noble attestation, and a comely respect exhibited to a vertuous Conversation:

Chrys. Tom. 1. p. 69.

making in some measure a satisfaction for the heinous affront done thereto, when instead of honouring it with a crown, they rewarded it with a cup of Poison, given to the excellent *Socrates*. Suitably to which testimony *Seneca* saith of *Cleanthes*, that his vertuous Practice depended more upon the observation of *Zeno*'s life, than the information of his doctrine. *Zenonem Cleanthes non expressisset si eum tantummodo audisset; vita ejus interfuit, secreta perspexit, observavit illum an ex formula sua viveret.* Cleanthes (saith he) *had not so nearly resembled* Zeno, *if he had onely attended to his discourses: he was present to his life, he took notice of his private carriage, he observed whether his practice did suit to his doctrine.* So that *Stoicism* it self which speaketh such Prodigies, was it seems founded not onely upon big words, the issues of a speculative fancy, but more upon the good Practice of its first Master and Institutour. And indeed he that would effectually perswade the undertaking of any enterprise, must either suppose it, or prove it effectible; and the most easie, the most evident way of proving it is by Example. *Men* (saith *Pliny Junior* well) *are better instructed by examples, which have in them chiefly this advantage, that they do prove the things may be done which they enjoyn.* And, *Humane infirmity* saith (*Salvian* to the same purpose) *requires the assistance of example, that it may more easily now perform that, which it knows others to have before done; all posterity being admonished by hearing that what hath once been done, may be done again*: And, *The Example* (saith St. *Bernard*) *of a work done is a lively and efficacious Oration, easily perswading what we intend, by proving that feasible, which we strive to perswade unto.* Upon which score we therefore are exceedingly obliged to those holy men who by their Practice have assured us, that the highest duties exacted of us by our religion (the mortification of unreasonable desires, the suppression of irregular passions; the loving and blessing our Enemies; the renouncing worldly vanities and pleasures, the rejoycing in afflictions, the voluntary abdication of our estates in some cases, yea, exposing life it self to inevitable hazard and loss) are not chimerical Propositions of impossible Performances; but duties (if we shall seriously and vigorously apply our endeavours to them, and suffer our hopes to be elevated by their example) really practicable: Piety abstractedly view'd in Precept may seem an aiery Project, a Name, a Notion; but it being seen in Example will prove a matter substantial, true and feasible. A direct and pure speculation thereof may dazle our sight, and dash our hopes; but as being reflected from Persons practising it we may bear its lustre, and hope to attain it.

Melius homines exemplis docentur, quæ imprimis hoc boni habent, quæ approbant, quæ præcipiunt fieri posse. Plin. Jun. *Paneg.*

Adjuvari se exemplis exoptat humana infirmitas, quo facilius ipsa nunc faciat, quæ alios fecisse ante cognoscat; dum admonetur auditu ætas omnis fieri posse, quod factum est. Salv. *ad Eccl. Cath.*

Sermo quidam vivus, & efficax exemplum operis est, facile persuadens quod intendimus, dum factibile probat esse, quod suademus. Bern. *de Resur. Serm.* 3.

Ex aliorum factis fieri posse credunt, quod forte cum putant fieri non posse pigrescunt. Cyp. *Ep.* l. 2. 2.

2. Examples do enflame courage. So the Apostle to the *Hebrews* signifieth, when to this purpose he intimateth that he mentioned and setteth before them the examples of the *Patriarchs*; that he thereby might excite their courage, and cause them resolutely to undertake that obedience, and patiently to undergo those afflictions, which they performed and sustained; *that* (saith he) *ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.* For that heat, and active Spirit, which in some degree resideth in all mens breasts, is by example kindled, as one flame is kindled by the contact, or approach of another. How many Persons timorous, and averse from dangerous undertakings, have notwithstanding become very bold and adventrous in war by the discipline and influence of an exemplary valour? 'Tis *Plutarch*'s observation concerning *Cæsar*'s Souldiers, that they who in service under other Commanders

Heb. 6. 12.

did

did not exceed the ordinary rate of courage, nor excel their fellows, did yet when he lead them become irresistibly valiant, being animated and inspired by his unparallel'd Gallantry; and who is there indeed so incurably heartless? so desperately sluggish or stupid, whom the sight of a valiant Leader, marching before into the mouth of danger, will not infuse fire and vigour into, and instigate forward into a participation of brave adventure? So example doth by a kind of contagion insinuate courage, or inveagle men thereinto; beside that it is a kind of daring, and proclaimeth him a Dastard that will not imitate it; which imputation the lowest courage of Man can hardly digest; and will therefore by doing somewhat answerable strive to decline it.

——*Fortis in armis*
Cæsareis Labienus erat.

3. Again, Examples provoke emulation; which is another strong Principle of activity; moving us earnestly to desire, (and thence eagerly to pursue) whatever good, privilege, or advantage we see another to enjoy. To observe another of the same nature and capacities with our selves to have shone with an illustrious vertue, to be consecrated to Posterity by a *lasting* fame, and to be crowned with glorious rewards above; what other reflections of thought can it produce in us, than such as these? shall he a man, like my self, endued with the same faculties, appetites and passions; subject to the same infirmities, temptations, needs, cares and encumbrances of life, shall he by noble dispositions of Soul, and worthy Performances render himself highly considerable; while I by sordid qualities, and unworthy Practices debase, and render my self despicable? shall he leave behind him monuments of eternal Praise, while I do nothing worthy of regard or memory? shall he enjoy the favour of the great God, and the comforts of a blessed Eternity, but I be wholly deprived of that joyful Estate, and plunged into endless sorrows, and desperate misery? shall a *Joseph* stoutly resist and overcome the strongest Temptations, and I be easily baffled by the least solicitation of Vice? shall a stripling *David* gloriously triumph over Giants, while I basely am vanquished by Dwarfs? shall *Job* be stripped of all his Goods with contentedness, and endure the most grievous Pains with Patience, while I am discomposed for any small loss, and dismayed by the least cross accident? shall *Abraham* here by his faith, and obedience attain to be called the Friend of God, and rest for ever in his glorious and happy Bosom, while I deservedly am refused the honour and comfort of that Heavenly communion here, and shall hereafter be cast out from that blissful Presence into the dismal mansions of wretched folly and wickedness? Did *Paul*, once a stubborn Jew, a blind Pharisee, a grievous Blasphemer, a bloody Persecutour, by a seasonable Conversion repair his State, approve himself to God by an eminent zeal for his glory, undergo restless Pains, run desperate hazards, and endure all sorts of distresses for the propagation of Gods Heavenly truth, obtaining thence a never-fading crown of Glory in Heaven, and a perpetual renown upon Earth; and shall I then, who from my youth have been educated in the most true and holy religion, who have by solemn engagements devoted my self thereto; who may without any trouble, or danger profess and practice according to that holy discipline, proceed in wicked courses, provoking God's wrath, and attracting his vengeance upon me? No: since the capacities are alike, since the means are common, since the rewards of Piety are promiscuously exposed and offered unto all, why should I by deplorable perverseness or negligence suffer my self to be deprived of it and its benefits? Why shall not I become

Chrys. T. 1. p. 77. T. 6. p. 148. T. 5. Orat. 101.
Φύσει γὰρ φιλόκαλον ἔσην τὸν φύσην τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰδὼς ὁ Κύριος, &c.

as good, as commendable, as happy as any other man? These are the conceits and voices of natural emulation, that mighty Passion (so often and by many effects it discovereth it self to be) implanted in our original constitution to be as a spur and incentive, stimulating and enflaming us unto the ready undertaking, and vigorous pursuit of good purposes; the which perhaps hath produced more noble effects, than any other Passion, or Inclination of our Souls: for all manner of excellency in knowledge, in proweſs, in vertue how often doth it issue from this source? Doth not the admired fame of men notable for Learning (recorded in Story, or subject to present observation) and a jealousie of being surpassed in accomplishments competent to humane nature, sharpen the appetite, and rouse the industry of most Scholars, whom neither the love of knowledge, nor its apparent usefulness could any-wise perswade to bear so much toil in acquist thereof? Do not all Histories acquaint us, that the most gallant enterprizes and exploits of famous Warriours have derived their beginning from an emulation of the glory purchased by their Ancestours? (wisdom and valour have thus especially been propagated; one Man's signal excellency being Parent to the like in many other.) And that this Passion may in like manner be subservient to the Production of Vertue and Piety, is plain enough from parity of reason, and from experience; and we have (for farther argument thereof) the *Apostles* Practice using it to this purpose: St. *Paul* employed it as an engine for the conversion of his dear countreymen; whom by raising in them a jealousie of being out-stripped (in God's favour, and its effects) by the *Gentiles*, he endeavoureth to provoke to the embracing of the Christian Faith; *I speak to you Gentiles* (saith he) *in as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnifie my Office,* εἴ πως παραζηλῶσω μου τὴν σάρκα, *if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.* And St. *James* instigateth us unto fervency of Prayer, by minding us, that *Elias was a man of like passions with our selves*; yet was able by his Prayers to shut and open Heaven, to procure barrenness and fertility to the Earth. And the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* chargeth us, to *consider one another,* εἰς παροξυσμὸν ἀγάπης, καὶ καλῶν ἔργων, *so as to provoke one another* (or by mutual emulation to sharpen one another) *to charity and good works.*

—*Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim*
Tollere humo.—

Rom. 11. 14. 10. 19.

Jam. 5. 17.

4. Examples do work upon modesty, that *preserver and guardian of vertue*, as *Cicero* calls it. For every good action of another doth upbraid, reproach and shame him, who acteth not conformably thereto. Can we without a trembling heart, and blushing forehead view the Practices of the ancient Saints, if ours be altogether unlike them? If they to please God, and secure their salvation did undergo such *prodigious* Pains in assiduous devotions, abstinencies, watchings, and we contrary-wise are extreamly sluggish, cold and negligent in the Performance of our ordinary duties; if they willingly renounced all sensual complacencies, and we either cherish our selves in a soft delicacy of life, or wallow in a profane dissolution of manners; if they to free themselves from distracting cares, voluntarily disburthened themselves of all needless encumbrances, and we are wholly busie in *heaping up* wealth, and driving on worldly interests; if they gladly embraced and endured the sharpest afflictions, and we are terrified by the thought, are overwhelmed by the sense of the least disappointment, or distastful occurrence; how can we without extream regret of mind, and confusion of face consider their Practice, or compare it with ours? It is a profligate impudence of him that can daily hear, and read

Custos omnium virtutum, dedecus fugiens, laudemque maxime consequens verecundia est. Cic. *Part. Rhet.*

read the Stories of their doings, without being deeply ſenſible, and aſhamed at the diſſonance appearing between their courſe of life, and his.

5. Example awakens that curioſity, which is natural to us, and of no mean efficacy upon our actions. For whatever we ſee done, we are apt to be inquiſitive concerning it; why and to what purpoſe it is done, what the grounds are, and what the fruits of the Performance; eſpecially if the matter ſeem conſiderably important, and the action proceedeth from a Perſon deſerving reſpect; whereof having paſſed ſome competent judgment, we are by the ſame inſtinct of curioſity farther tranſported into a deſire of diſcerning by our trial and experience whether the event correſpondeth to our expectation; ſo are we eaſily induced to imitate the actions of others. By which means as vice ordinarily is conceived and propagated, (men by a prepoſterous and perverſe curioſity being inveagled to try what they ſee others affect or enjoy) ſo may vertue alſo by the ſame means be engendred and nouriſhed; the general ways of producing and maintaining thoſe contrary habits being alike. As therefore, 'tis a great blemiſh and reproach to humane nature, that,

——— *Faciles imitandis* Juven.
Turpibus & pravis omnes ſumus———

we (as the *Satyriſt* truly obſerveth of us) *have a great proclivity to follow naughty examples*; ſo there is from hence ſome amends, that we have alſo ſome inclination to imitate good and worthy Precedents; the which is ſomewhat more ſtrong and vigorous, becauſe countenanced and encouraged by the approbation of reaſon, our moſt noble faculty.

6. Examples alſo do pleaſe the mind and fancy in contemplation of them, thence drawing a conſiderable influence upon practice. No kind of ſtudious entertainment doth ſo generally delight as Hiſtory; or the tradition of remarkable examples: even thoſe who have an abhorrency or indiſpoſition toward other ſtudies (who have no *genius* to apprehend the more intricate ſubtilties of Science; nor the patience to purſue rational conſequences) are yet often much taken with hiſtorical narrations; theſe ſtriking them with a delectable variety of accidents, with circumſtantial deſcriptions, and ſenſible repreſentations of objects, do greatly affect and delight their fancies; eſpecially the relation of notable adventures, and rare accidents, is wont to be attended with great pleaſure and ſatisfaction. And ſuch are thoſe, which preſent to us the lives and examples of holy men, abounding with wonders of providence and grace: no attempts ſo gallant, no exploits ſo illuſtrious as thoſe, which have been atchieved by the faith and patience, by the prudence and courage of the ancient Saints; they do far ſurpaſs the moſt famous atchievements of *Pagan* Heroes. It was (I dare ſay) more wonderful, that *Abraham* with his retinue of Houſhold Servants ſhould vanquiſh four potent and victorious Kings; and that *Gideon* with three hundred unarmed men ſhould diſcomfit a vaſtly numerous hoſt; than that *Alexander* with a well appointed army of ſtout and expert Souldiers ſhould overturn the *Perſian* Empire. The Siege of *Jericho* is ſo far more remarkable, than thoſe moſt famous ones of *Numantia*, and *Saguntus*, as it is more ſtrange, that the blaſt of Trumpets, and the noiſe of People ſhouting ſhould demoliſh Walls, than the ſhaking them with Rams, or diſcharging maſſy Stones againſt them. And he that carefully will compare the deeds of *Sampſon* and *Hercules*, ſhall find, that one true exploit performed by the former doth much in force and ſtrangeneſs ſurmount the twelve fabulous labours of the other:

No

No triumphs indeed are comparable to thoſe of Piety; no trophies are ſo magnificent and durable, as thoſe which victorious faith erecteth: that hiſtory therefore which reports the *res geſtæ*, the acts and ſufferings of moſt pious men, muſt in reaſon be eſteemed not only the moſt uſeful, but alſo the moſt pleaſant; yeilding the ſweeteſt entertainment to well diſpoſed minds; wherein we ſee vertue expreſſed, not in bare *idea* only, but in actual life, ſtrength, motion; in all its beauty, and ornaments: than which no ſpectacle can be more ſtately; no object more grateful can be preſented to the diſcerning eye of reaſon.

7. We may farthermore conſider, that God hath provided and recommended to us one example, as a perfect ſtandard of good practice, The example of our Lord; the which declareth the uſe and efficacy of good example, as one principal inſtrument of Piety. That indeed is the moſt univerſal, abſolute and aſſured Pattern; yet doth it not ſuperſede the uſe of other examples: Not onely the valour and conduct of the General, but thoſe of inferiour officers, yea, the reſolution of common Souldiers do ſerve to animate their fellows: The Stars have their ſeaſon to guide us, as well as the Sun; eſpecially when our eyes are ſo weak, as hardly to beer the day. Even, conſidering our infirmity, inferiour examples, by their imperfection ſometime have a peculiar advantage. Our Lords moſt imitable practice did proceed from an immenſe vertue of divine grace, which we cannot arrive to; it in it ſelf is ſo perfect and high, that we may not ever reach it; looking upon it may therefore ſometimes dazle, and diſcourage our weakneſs; but other good men had aſſiſtances in meaſure, ſuch as we may hope to approach unto; they were ſubject to the difficulties, which we feel; they were expoſed to the perils of falling, which we fear: we may therefore hope to march on in a reaſonable diſtance after them; we may, by help of the ſame grace, come near in tranſcribing their leſs exact Copy.

To conclude, ſince upon ſo many accounts we are obliged to follow good examples; ſince they are of ſo great uſe toward our proceeding in the way to happineſs; thence they conduce to the clear inſtruction of our underſtanding, to the forcibly inclining our reaſon, to the vehement excitement of our Paſſions, to the delightfully affecting our imagination in ſubſerviency to good practice; let us make that due and profitable uſe of them, which we ſhould and may do. Let us with diligent attention peruſing the ſacred hiſtory meditate upon the lives of holy men therein propounded as Patterns of a perſevering Faith in God, and conſcionable obedience to his commandments. Let the light of their exemplary practice in all kind of piety and vertue continually ſhine upon our ſouls, to direct our minds, to inflame our affections, to quicken our reſolutions, to detect the errours, and correct the faults of our lives, that we imitating their vertuous and pious converſation, may partake of thoſe comfortable rewards; of that joy, and bliſs, whereof they reſt poſſeſſed: The which God Almighty, and our Bleſſed Saviour the authour and finiſher of our Faith, by his gracious aid and bleſſing grant unto us; to whom be all glory and praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SERMON III.

Abiding in Chriſt to be demonſtrated by walking as Chriſt did.

1 JOHN 2. 6.

He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk as he walked.

TO *abide in Chriſt*, to *be in Chriſt*, to *put on Chriſt*; and reciprocally *Chriſt*'s *being in us, living, dwelling, being formed in us*; and the like expreſſions occurring in H. Scripture, do not denote any Phyſical inherence, or Eſſential conjunction between *Chriſt* and us (ſuch as thoſe who affect unintelligible miſteries rather than plain ſenſe, would conceit) but onely that mutual relation accruing from our profeſſion of being *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, our being inſerted into his body the Church, being governed by his Laws, partaking of his Grace, with all the privileges of the Goſpel, relying upon his promiſes, and hoping for eternal ſalvation from him. By vertue of which relation we may be ſaid in a myſtical, or moral manner to be united to him, deriving ſtrength and ſuſtenance from him, as the members from the head, the branches from the tree, the other parts of the building from the foundation; by which ſimilitudes this myſterious union is uſually expreſſed in Scripture; in effect briefly, to be in, or to abide in *Chriſt* implyeth no more, but our being truly, in faith and practice, Chriſtians; ſo that the meaning of St. *John*'s words ſeemeth plainly and ſimply to be this; Whoever pretends to be a Chriſtian (that is, to believe the Doctrine, and embrace the Diſcipline of *Chriſt*) ought to walk (that is, is obliged to order the whole courſe of his life and actions) as *Chriſt* walked (that is, as *Chriſt* did live and converſe in the World:) Or, it is the duty of every one, profeſſing Chriſtianity, to conform his life to the pattern of *Chriſt*'s life, to follow his example, to imitate his practice. This is the importance of the words, this the ſubject of our preſent diſcourſe.

Rom. 8. 10. Gal. 2. 20. Eph. 3. 17. Gal. 4. 19.

I. For illuſtration and confirmation of which point, we may obſerve, that the H. *Apoſtles* do, upon all occaſions, aſſume this ſuppoſition, when they would perſwade their Diſciples to the practice of any vertue, or performance of any duty; enforcing their exhortations, by repreſenting the practice of *Chriſt*, as an unqueſtionable ground of obligation, and an effectual inducement thereto. Hence they incite them to holineſs: *But* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *as he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation*; to Charity: *And walk in love* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *as Chriſt alſo loved us*: to Patience; *Becauſe* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps*. And *Let us*

1 Pet. 1. 15. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 21.

Heb. 12. 1. (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the authour and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that*
Phil. 2. 2. *was set before him endured the cross* : to humility ; *Let* (saith St. *Paul*) *the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation* : to charitable compliance, and inoffensive demeanour toward o-
1 Cor. 10. 33. 11. 1. thers, intimated by St. *Paul*, when he says, *Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved* ;
Rom. 15. 2. *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ* ; and again, *Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification* ; *for even Christ pleased not himself*. Thus do the *Apostles* take all occasion, from the like practice of *Christ*, to perswade the performance of duty ; and the strength of their argument lyeth upon the evidence of this supposition, that all professing themselves Christians are especially obliged to imitate *Christ*'s example. And their authority may be backed and inforced by several reasons.

II. Doing so hath a reasonableness and decency grounded upon our relations to *Christ* : it is fit and comely that the manners of the Disciple should be regulated by those of his Master ; that the Servant should not, in his garb and demeanour, dissent or vary from his Lord; that the Subject should conform his humour to the fashion of his Prince ; especially that we should thus comply and conform to such a Master, such a Lord, such a Prince, whom (upon highest considerations) by a most voluntary choice, and in a most solemn manner we have absolutely devoted our selves unto : This
Joh. 13. 13. reason our Lord doth himself urge : *Ye* (saith he to his Disciples) *call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am* ; *if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet*.

III. Following *Christ*'s example is requisite to demonstrate the sincerity of our faith, love and reverence to him. It is the most natural way of testifying affection and respect to imitate the manners of those persons, who are the objects of those acts and dispositions ; to esteem what they approve, to delight in what they affect, and consequently (since actions do proceed from affections) to do as they do. Contrary actions are plain arguments of contrary judgments, inclinations and affections : Who can imagine we sincerely believe in *Christ*, or heartily love him, or truly honour him, that seeth us to loath what he liked, or affect what he detested; to contemn what he prized, or value what he despised ; to neglect what he pursued, or embrace what he avoided ? but if our lives resemble his, any Man will thence collect our respect and affection to him : this argu-
Joh. 13. 35. ment our Saviour doth also intimate : *By this* (saith he) *shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye love one another* ; that is, it will be an evident sign and strong argument, that ye really do believe in, love and honour me, if ye imitate me in my charity.

IV. By pretending to be Christians we acknowledge the transcendent goodness, worth and excellency of our Saviour ; that he was incomparably better, and wiser than any person ever was, or could be; that he alwayes acted with the highest reason, out of the most excellent disposition of mind, in order to the best purposes ; and that his practice therefore reasonably should be the rule and pattern of ours. For the best and exactest in every kind is the measure of the rest. All that would obtain exquisite skill in any Art, or Faculty, think best to imitate the works of the best Masters therein ; A Painter to draw after the pieces of *Zeuxis* or *Apelles* (of *Raphael*, or *Titian*) an Oratour to speak in the style of *Cicero*, or *Demosthenes* ; a Souldier to emulate the military Atchievements of *Hannibal*, or *Cæsar* : in like manner, reason requireth, if we would

live

live well and happily, that we ſhould endeavour to conform our practice to that of our Saviour, the moſt perfect mirrour of all vertue and goodneſs.

V. The practice of our Saviour did throughly agree with his Doctrine and Law; he requireth nothing of us which he did not eminently perform himſelf. He *fulfilled* in deed as well as taught in word *all righteouſneſs*. He was not *ignava opera, Philoſopha ſententia*; like thoſe Maſters of Philoſophy, ſo frequently taxed and derided by the *Satyriſts*; who, by a horrid garb, ſupercilious looks, and loud declamations, would ſeem to diſcountenance thoſe vices which themſelves practiſed; nor like thoſe hypocritical Lawyers in the Goſpel, who laded other men with *heavy burthens*, ſuch as themſelves would *not touch with one of their fingers*: No, he impoſed nothing on us, which he did not firſt bear upon his own ſhoulders: the ſtrictneſs of his life did, in all reſpects, correſpond with the ſeverity of his Precepts; or rather did indeed much exceed them. They therefore who pretend to believe his doctrine, and avow themſelves bound to obſerve his Law, are conſequently engaged tō follow his practice, in which his Doctrine and Law are ſignally exemplified.

Οὐδὲν ψυχρότερον τῶ κατὰ λόγυς φιλοσοφῆσι. Chryſ.

Ὧν τὸ βῆμα τῦ τρόπυ κατήχεσεν. Naz.

Luc. 11. 46.

VI. It being the deſign of divine goodneſs, in ſending our Saviour, to render us good and happy, to deliver us from ſin and miſery, to inſtruct us in the knowledge, and excite us to the practice of all vertue; and thereby to qualify us for the enjoyment of a bleſſed immortality; effecting all this in a way agreeable to our natural condition and capacity; there could not be deviſed any more powerful means, or more convenient method of accompliſhing thoſe excellent purpoſes, than by propounding ſuch an example, and obliging us to comply therewith: the which may appear, 1. by conſidering in general the advantage and efficacy that good example is apt to have upon practice; 2. by weighing the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example above all others, in order to thoſe ends; and 3. by ſurveying the particular inſtances of imitable goodneſs repreſented in the life of our Saviour.

1. Good example is naturally an effectual inſtrument of good practice; for that it doth moſt compendiouſly, pleaſantly and eaſily inſtruct; repreſenting things to be done at one view, in a full body, cloathed with all their modes and circumſtances; it recommends them to us, by the moſt plain and plauſible way of reaſoning, (and withal the moſt ſure and ſafe) the authority of wiſe and good men; it encourageth, by evidently declaring the practicableneſs of rules preſcrib'd; it kindleth and rowſeth mens courage, by a kind of contagion, as one flame doth kindle another; it raiſeth a worthy emulation of doing laudable things, which we ſee done; or of obtaining a ſhare in the commendations and rewards of vertue. It urgeth modeſty, breeding ſhame and regret in them who act contrarily thereto; it awakeneth curioſity, thereby producing a deſire to make trial of what it propoſeth; it affecteth and pleaſeth the fancy, thereby inſinuating an approbation, admiration and liking of the good things, which it repreſenteth; briefly, it exciteth and engageth all our paſſions, ſetting on work all thoſe powerful ſprings of activity, it conſequently is, in its own nature, an efficacious mean of good practice. This we may, in general, ſay of all good examples; but,

2. More eſpecially the example of *Chriſt* doth in efficacy and influence upon good practice, ſurpaſs all others; upon ſeveral accompts.

Firſt, In that it is a ſure and infallible rule; an entire and perfect rule of practice; deficient in no part, ſwerving in no circumſtance from truth

and right, which priviledges are competent to no other example. The Practice of the beſt men is not always to be imitated, nor ever abſolutely as a certain ground of action; it is to be (ſo far as we have ability) conſidered, examined and compared to more certain rules; (the Divine Laws, and the Principles of right Reaſon) according to their agreement with which they are to be followed; they are indeed (before trial of the caſe) probable arguments of what is done by them being good and lawful; they do outweigh ſlender and obſcure reaſonings about the goodneſs of things; they may, when opportunity, leiſure, or ability of farther enquiry and judgment about things are wanting, ſerve to direct us; but they are not throughly ſure rules, or perfect meaſures of our duty. We ſhould beware leaſt we be ſeduced even by holy perſons; and therefore with circumſpection and caution ſhould peruſe their ſtory, and contemplate their demeanour; whereof thoſe which are explicitely commended, or allowed by the divine judgment, we may, being aſſured that we are in the ſame circumſtances, ſafely follow (taking them for monitories, encouragements and excitements to our duty) but thoſe that are directly condemned by the ſame ſentence, or apparently devious from God's Law, we as carefully ſhould avoid; ſuch as are of a doubtful and unaccountable nature we are to ſuſpend about, and not to ground upon; nor to argue from the fact to the rightfulneſs of them; the ſafeſt way being always (as we are able) to have recourſe to the ſimple, plain and perſpicuous precepts of God, and dictates of reaſon. For the beſt men have been always ſubject to errours and infirmities; the fountain of original corruption in them was never ſo dried up, or cloſely ſtopped, but that ſome impure ſtreams have bubbled forth; the fire of natural concupiſcence was never ſo utterly quenched, but that ſometimes it would blaze, or ſmoke out in bad actions; that inteſtine enemy (the fleſh) was never throughly ſubdued, nor the body of ſin quite ſlain and mortified in any other mortal man: Good men have ever had ſome foul ſpots, or deforming wrinkles appearing in the beauteous face of their converſation; they have had their inequalities and indiſpoſitions of humour; their ebbs of devotion; their fits of ſloth; their wanton freaks; their ſlips often, and ſometimes their falls; they have been ſubject to be deluded by miſtake, to be ſurprized by inadvertency, to be tranſported by paſſion, to be ſwayed by temper, to be biaſſed by intereſt, to be allured by temptation into falſe and unwarrantable proceedings; they might ſometime fail in the ſubſtance, oftner in the degree, in the manner, in the circumſtances of action; we find them often complaining of their proneneſs to do amiſs, bemoaning the wretched frailty of their ſtate; yea often repenting and bitterly mourning for their actual tranſgreſſions: There hardly is any Saint, recorded in Scripture, without ſome blemiſh in his actions; which ſhews our weakneſs, and ingageth us to be wary. They were indeed endowed with ſufficient competencies of divine light and graces ſutable to their private needs, or to the publick exigencies of their times, places, occaſions and affairs; but not with the perfection and extream degrees thereof, requiſite to preſerve them from all miſcarriage; ſo that we are not alwayes, or in all caſes, to conform our actions to their examples: We muſt not learn to equivocate of *Abraham*, nor to circumvent of *Jacob*, nor to be cholerick of *Moſes*, (ſo as in our exceſs of paſſion to break the Tables of the Divine Law) nor of *Eli* to be fondly affectionate, or indulgent to our relations, nor of *David* to utter uncharitable imprecations; nor to diſſemble of St. *Peter*; nor of St. *Paul* to revile Magi-

It was ill ſaid of *Seneca*: *Catoni ebrietas objecta eſt, & facilius efficiet, quiſquis objecerit hoc crimen, honeſtum, quam turpem Catonem.*

Magistrates: The use we are to make of many practices, of most eminently pious men, is not to be misguided by them into wrong paths; not by them to authorize, or excuse our presumptuous misdeeds; but to make us to admire, and to relye upon the Divine Mercy, which so graciously did overlook and pardon their offences; to provoke us to an imitation of their repentance; to render us watchful in shunning those rocks, upon which persons, so skilful in the conduct of their lives, have dashed; to engage us to humility, by considering so manifest arguments of our frailty, and our being obnoxious to greater and more frequent miscarriages.

But as to our Saviour's example, the case is quite different; for though he did Miracles as God, he commanded as *Christ*; he did many heroical things in discharge of his office, *&c.* in which things, we cannot, or may not imitate him; yet whatever in his life was in its own nature imitable by us, which did not exceed our natural powers, nor disagree with our condition and quality; whatever he as Man, in a private capacity, as subject to the divine Law, with regard thereto performed, we may with all freedom, confidence and security imitate; nor can so doing incur any danger of errour, or guilt; for we cannot, without great folly and impiety, suspect any fault, or imperfection in his most pure, righteous and innocent life: He was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners*: He was *a lamb without blemish and without spot*; *He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He did no sin, nor was any guile found in his mouth. God gave him of his Spirit not by measure*: these are the voices and elogies of the Sacred Oracles concerning him. The heavenly extraction, even of his humanity, derived no original contagion from our polluted stock, and rendred him free from the common incentives of evil concupiscence. The inseparable presence of the Divinity with him (*for God was with him*, as St. *Peter* expressed it) and the unrestrained effusion of the H. Spirit upon him did preserve him from all defilements of infectious conversation in this World; a clear evidence of divine light always shining in his Soul, directed him infallibly in the paths of truth and righteousness: No tempest of cross accidents without, nor any estuations of internal passion could discompose the steady calm and serenity of his mind; no allurement of worldly pleasure, nor temptation of profit could pervert his practice, or seduce his heart, being enflamed with most intense love of God, and entire charity to men: so that his example must needs be a perfect rule and sure direction to us. Which consideration cannot but yeild great encouragement and comfort in following him; freeing us from all anxious doubt, and suspicion of mistake in our spiritual progress; like the presence of a sure guide to the bewildred Traveller; like the appearance of a Star to the weather-beaten Mariner; like that miraculous Pillar of Fire, which safely conducted the wandring *Israelites* through the unknown and unfrequented Passages of a wild Desart. But farther,

Heb. 7. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 22. Joh. 3. 34. Act. 10. 38.

Secondly, The peculiar excellency of our Lord's Example appears, in that he was, by the Divine Providence, to this very purpose designed, and sent into the World, as well by his Practice as by his Doctrine, to be the guide and master of holy life, and obedience to all men; and did accordingly propound to himself this end of his actions, that he might be imitated by his disciples. So he declareth himself, as to some considerable passages of his life, and thence, by reasonable inference, we may suppose the same of the rest, so far as they might be conducible to the same end; especially, since of some performances, no other, or no so probable

Διὰ τοῦτο οὐ αὐτὸς ἐνήστευσεν ἐκ αὐτὸς τούτης δεόμενος, ἀλλ' ἡμᾶς παιδεύων. Chrys. *Tom.* 2. p. 81.

accompt

accompt can be given, as that they were done for exemplarity: For why ſhould he faſt, who had no ſins to be repented of, no rebellious fleſh to be tamed, no intemperate deſires to be mortifi'd, no coldneſs of devotion to be enlivened thereby? And why did he offer himſelf to be Baptized, who had no original ſtain to be cleanſed of, no fault to be forgiven, no want of ſpecial grace to be conferr'd? Why, but by his exemplary fulfilling all righteouſneſs, to teach us ready obedience to all Divine Inſtitutions, and peaceable compliance with all laudable cuſtoms: So an ancient Writer wiſely deſcanteth upon thoſe Practices of our Saviour: *He was* (ſaith that Writer) *Baptized, and faſted, not becauſe he had need of any cleanſing, or faſting, who in nature was pure and holy; but that he might atteſt to the truth of St.* John, *and might exhibit a pattern to us.* What induc'd him to condeſcend to ſuch a mis-beſeeming employment to appearance, as the waſhing of his diſciples feet, he doth himſelf tell us: *If I then* (ſaith he) *your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done unto you.* This was his profeſſed ſcope and drift, in that admirable deportment of his, to teach us humility, charity and condeſcenſion toward the meaneſt of our Brethren. What did thoſe exuberant inſtances of charity, Practiſed by him, import? this eſpecially, that we ſhould imitate them; hither he drives them; *This* (ſaith he) *is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* Why was he, in his diſpoſition, ſo meek and gentle, in his converſation ſo humble and lowly? to this purpoſe, that we might of him learn thoſe excellent qualities: *Learn of me* (ſaith he) *for I am meek and lowly in heart.* And St. *Peter* ſaith, *That Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps*; ſignifying, that he deſigned his patience to be exemplary to us. If then our Saviour, in his humility, his charity, his meekneſs, his patience, intended his life to be exemplary, and expreſly propounded it as ſuch; then certainly, in his devotion, his ſelf-denial, his juſtice, in all other vertues he had the ſame intention; and what he intended, God deſigned to be; and what God deſigned to be, was doubtleſs eminently conducible to the end deſigned; and therefore our Saviour's life was moſt exemplary. Other Saints indeed were of very exemplary converſation, but either proved to be ſo, according to ordinary courſe of providence, without any peculiar deſignation thereto (their free choice conſpiring, with God's Grace, in producing good works ſhining before men) or at moſt, by a reſtrained determination to ſome particular time, place or people; as *Moſes* was choſen and appointed to conduct the *Iſraelites*; David *was taken from the ſheepfold, and following the ewes great with young, to feed* Jacob *God's people, and* Iſrael *his inheritance*; *Jeremy* was ſanctified from his birth, and ordained to be a Prophet of the Nations in his times, and St. *Paul* was ſeparated from the womb to be a Preacher of the Chriſtian Faith: theſe, and ſuch like eminent perſons, Almighty God, in his goodneſs, was pleaſed to raiſe up, to be, in their generations, as it were partial and temporary Saviours, as by declaring his will, and revealing his truth to men, ſo by guiding them with a remarkable example; theſe *burning and ſhining* * *Lamps* (as St. *John* the *Baptiſt* is called) were indeed, like lamps ſet up in ſome particular families, with a competent luſtre, to diſpel the preſent darkneſs, ſhining within their definite ſphere, and for a determinate time; but our Saviour, like the Sun, fixed in a higher orb, was ordained with a perpetual and unconfined ſplendour to illuminate the Univerſe; to cauſe a general and everlaſting day of healthful and comfortable knowledge over the face of the whole earth. He

Ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ ἐνήστευσεν οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπορυπώσεως ἢ νηστείας χρείαν ἔχων ἢ καθαίρσεως ὅτῳ φύσει καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος, ἀλλ' ἵνα Ἰωάννῃ ἀλήθειαν μεμαρτυρήσῃ καὶ ἡμῖν ὑπογεγραμμὸν παρέχηται.

John 15. 12.

Mat. 11. 2.
1 Pet. 2. 21.

Acts 7. 35.
Pſal. 106. 23.
Pſal. 78. 70.
Jer. 1. 5.

Joh. 5. 35.
* Λύχνος ὁ καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων.

was

was *that true light, which enlighteneth every man coming into the world*; *He was prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Nations* (not *Israel* onely, but the *Nations* indefinitely, or all Nations.) He was ordained, not Commander of a single Regiment, or Party, but Captain-General of all Mankind, to conduct all those who were disposed to follow him, by a victorious obedience, into that triumphant state of everlasting joy and happiness. His example doth belong unto us all without exception, by divine ordination; for *we*, all of us, *were* (to use St. *Paul's* expression) *predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* So it was, and so it became the infinite goodness, and philanthropy of God, to bestow upon mankind one perfectly good example, inviting to all vertue, and so fit to countervail all those many bad ones, wherewith we converse, enticing to vice; to set forth, among so many imperfect ones, one accomplished piece of his heavenly workmanship, able to attract the eyes, and ravish the hearts of all men with admiration of its excellent worth and beauty; to offer to our view some discernible representation of his invisible perfections; that so we might better be induced and inured to apprehend, love, reverence and imitate himself, by contemplation of that most exquisite image of him; to give an evident proof, that the highest vertue is not unpracticable, that humane nature, by aid and guidance of the Divine Spirit, may arrive to the sublimest pitch of perfection in goodness; in fine, to expose such a common, sweet and lovely pattern, as we with assurance, joy and comfort may follow.

John 1. 9. Luc. 2. 31,32. Heb. 2. 10. Rom. 8. 29. Joh. 5. 10. Ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ποιῇ ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ.

Thirdly, Our Saviours example is especially influential upon practice, in that it was, by an admirable temperament, more accommodated for imitation than any others have been. That the perfect copy of his most holy life seems more easie to be transcribed, than the ruder draughts of other holy Men; for though it were written with an incomparable fairness, delicacy and evenness; not slurred with any foul blot, nor any where declining from exact streightness; yet were the lineaments thereof exceeding plain and simple; not by any gaudy flourishes, or impertinent intrigues rendred difficult, to studious imitation; so that even women and children, the weakest and meanest sort of people, as well as the most wise and ingenuous, might easily perceive its design, and with good success write after it. His was a gentle and steady light, bright indeed, but not dazling the eye; warm, but not scorching the face of the most intent beholder; No affected singularities, no supercilious morosities, no frivolous ostentations of seemingly high, but really fruitless performances; nothing that might deter a timorous, discourage a weak, or offend a scrupulous disciple, is observable in his practice: but on the contrary, his conversation was full of lowliness and condescension, of meekness and sweetness, of openness and candid simplicity; apt to envite and allure all men to approach toward it, and with satisfaction to enjoy it. He did not seclude himself into the constant retirements of a Cloister, nor into the farther recesses of a Wilderness (as some others have done) but conversed freely and indifferently with all sorts of men, even the most contemptible and odious sort of men, *Publicans* and *Sinners*; like the Sun, with an impartial bounty, liberally imparting his pleasant light and comfortable warmth to all. He used no uncouth austerities in habit, or diet, but complied, in his garb, with ordinary usage, and sustained his life with such food as casual opportunity did offer; so that his indifferency, in that kind, yielded matter of obloquy against him from the fond admirers of a humorous preciseness. His devotions, (though exceedingly sprightful and fervent)

fervent) were not uſually extended to a tedious and exhauſting durance, nor ſtrained into ecſtatical tranſports, charming the natural ſenſes, and overpowering the reaſon; but calm, ſteady and regular, ſuch as Perſons of honeſt intention and hearty deſire (though not endued with high fancy, or ſtirring paſſion) might readily imitate. His zeal was not violent or impetuous, except upon very great reaſon, and extraordinary occaſion, when the honour of God, or good of Men, was much concerned. He was not rigorous in the obſervance of traditional rites and cuſtoms, (ſuch as were needleſly burthenſome, or which contained in them more of formal ſhew, than of real fruit) yet behaved himſelf orderly and peaceably, giving due reſpect to the leaſt inſtitution of God, and complying with the innocent cuſtoms of men; thereby pointing out unto us the middle way between peeviſh ſuperſtition and boiſterous faction; which as always the moſt honeſt, ſo commonly is the moſt ſafe and pleaſant way to walk in. He delighted not to diſcourſe of ſublime miſteries (although his deep wiſdom comprehended all) nor of ſubtile ſpeculations and intricate queſtions, ſuch as might amuſe and perplex, rather than inſtruct and profit his Auditors; but uſually did feed his Auditors with the moſt common and uſeful truths, and that in the moſt familiar and intelligible language; not diſdaining the uſe of vulgar ſayings, and trivial proverbs, when they beſt ſerved to inſinuate his wholeſome meaning into their minds. His whole life was ſpent in exerciſe of the moſt eaſie and pleaſant, yet moſt neceſſary and ſubſtantial duties; obedience to God, charity, meekneſs, humility, patience, and the like; the which, that he might practiſe with the greateſt latitude, and with moſt advantage for general imitation, he did not addict himſelf to any particular way of life, but diſentangled himſelf from all worldly care and buſineſs; chuſing to appear in the moſt free, though very mean condition; that he might indifferently inſtruct, by his example, perſons of all callings, degrees and capacities; eſpecially the moſt, that is the poor; and might have opportunity, in the face of the world, to practiſe the moſt difficult of neceſſary duties; lowlineſs, contentedneſs, abſtinence from Pleaſure, contempt of the World, ſufferance of injuries and reproaches. Thus ſuited and tempered by Divine Wiſdom was the life of our bleſſed Saviour, that all ſorts of men might be in an equal capacity to follow him, that none might be offended, affrighted, or diſcouraged, but that all might be pleaſed, delighted, enamoured with the homely Majeſty, and plain beauty thereof: And in effect ſo it happened, that ordinary people (the weakeſt, but ſincereſt, and unprejudic'd ſort of men) were greatly taken with, moſt admired and applauded his deportment; many of them readily embracing his doctrine, and devoting themſelves to his diſcipline; while onely the proud, envious, covetous and ambitious *Scribes* and *Lawyers* rejected his excellent doctrine, ſcorned the heavenly ſimplicity, and holy integrity of his life.

Fourthly, The tranſcendent excellency of our Lords example appeareth, in that it is attended with the greateſt obligations (of gratitude and ingenuity, of juſtice, of intereſt, of duty) mightily engaging us to follow it. For 'tis not the example of an ordinary, or inconſiderable Perſon, of a ſtranger, of one indifferent, or unrelated to us; but of a glorious Prince, of heavenly extraction; (the firſt-born Son of the Almighty God, ſole heir of eternal Majeſty) of our Lord and Maſter, to whom we are for ever bound, by indiſpenſable bands of duty and obedience; of our great Captain, who hath undertaken to ſubdue our enemies, and hath obliged us to follow his conduct, in a holy warfare, againſt them, by moſt ſolemn ſacraments and vows; of our beſt friend, from whom we have

received

received the greateſt favours and benefits imaginable; of our moſt gracious Saviour, who, for our ſake, hath voluntarily ſuſtained moſt bitter pains, and ſhameful contumelies; having ſacrificed his deareſt heart-blood to redeem us from intolerable ſlaveries, and from extremities of horrible miſery; of him, to whom, in all reſpects, we do owe the higheſt reſpect, love and obſervance that can be: Now it is the nature and property both of reſpect and love (ſuch as upon ſo many grounds we owe to him) to beget in the perſon reſpecting and loving, an endeavour (anſwerable to the degrees of thoſe diſpoſitions) of conforming to, and reſembling the qualities and manners of the perſon reſpected, or beloved. We ſee how readily Children do comply with the cuſtoms of their Parents and Tutours; Servants of their Maſters and Patrons; Subjects of their Princes and Governours, with a ſtudious earneſtneſs compoſing themſelves to expreſs in their carriage, not onely their good or their indifferent faſhions and manners, but even their moſt palpable deformities and vices; inſomuch, that a whole family, a city, a nation may be debauch'd from its ſobriety, or reform'd from its diſſoluteneſs, even inſtantly, by the example of one perſon, who, by his place, power and authority, challengeth extraordinary reverence from men: and much greater influence hath hearty love to transform our manners into an agreement with the manners of him we love: *What a man loves, that he imitateth ſo much as lies in his power*, ſaith *Hierocles*, truly. For love being founded on a good eſteem, and a benevolent inclination thence reſulting, engageth the affectionate perſon to admire the qualities of him he affecteth, to obſerve his deportments, to make the moſt advantageous conſtruction of what he doeth; to fancy he doeth all things with beſt reaſon and diſcretion; to deem therefore, that all his actions deſerve and require imitation: hence doth love either find, or ſoon produce a competent ſimilitude in the parties, (a ſimilitude of mind, of will, of inclination and affection; an *Eadem velle & nolle*:) It doth forcibly attract as to a vicinity of place and converſe, ſo to an agreement of affections and actions; it uniteth the moſt diſtant, it reconcileth the moſt oppoſite, it turneth the moſt diſcordant natures into a ſweet conſent, and harmony of diſpoſition and demeanour. We then having the greateſt reaſon both to honour and love our Saviour, ſurely his example being duly ſtudied and conſidered by us, muſt needs obtain a ſuperlative influence upon our practice, and be very powerful to conform, and aſſimilate it to his.

Ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τις, κὴ μιμεῖσθαι ἔσον δύναται. Hier.

Theſe conſiderations may ſuffice, to ſhew the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example in vertue, and efficacy upon our practice; the ſame more abundantly might be deduc'd from a ſurvey of the moſt conſiderable particulars, in which we may and ought to imitate him. But the time will not ſuffer us to launch forth into ſo vaſt a ſea of diſcourſe. I ſhall onely therefore, from the premiſſes, exhort, That if any earneſt deſire of happineſs, any high eſteem of vertue, any true affection to genuine ſanctity do lodge in our breaſts, we ſhould apply this moſt excellent means of attaining them; the ſtudy and endeavour of imitating the life of our Lord: If we have in us any truth and ſincerity, and do not vainly prevaricate in our profeſſion of being *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, and votaries of that moſt Holy Inſtitution, let us manifeſt it by a real conformity to the practice of him who is our Maſter, and authour of our faith: If we have in us any wiſdom, or ſober conſideration of things, let us employ it in following the ſteps of that infallible guide, deſigned by heaven to lead us in the ſtreight, even and pleaſant ways of righteouſneſs, unto the poſſeſſion of everlaſting bliſs: If we do verily like, and approve

the practice of *Chriſt*, and are affected with the innocent, ſweet and lovely comelineſs thereof, let us declare ſuch our mind by a ſedulous care to reſemble it. If we bear any honour and reverence, any love and affection to *Chriſt*; if we are at all ſenſible of our relations, our manifold obligations, our duties to our great Lord, our beſt friend, our moſt gracious Redeemer; let us teſtify it by a zealous care to become like to him: Let a lively image of his moſt righteous and innocent, moſt holy and pious, moſt pure and ſpotleſs life be ever preſent to our fancies; ſo, as to inform our Judgments, to excite our affections, to quicken our endeavours, to regulate our purpoſes, to correct our miſtakes, to direct, amend and ſanctify our whole lives. Let us, with inceſſant diligence of ſtudy, meditate upon the beſt of hiſtories, wherein the tenour of his divine practice is repreſented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the moſt conſiderable paſſages thereof, entertaining them with devout paſſions, impreſſing them on our memories, and ſtriving to expreſs them in our converſations; Let us endeavour continually to walk in the ſteps of our Lord, and *to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth*; which that we may be able to do, do thou, O Bleſſed Redeemer, draw us, draw us by the cords of thy love; draw us by the ſenſe of thy goodneſs; draw us by the incomparable worth and excellency of thy perſon; draw us by the unſpotted purity and beauty of thy example; draw us by the merit of thy precious death, and by the power of thy Holy Spirit; *Draw us*, good Lord, *and we ſhall run after thee.* Amen.

Coll after *Eaſter*, 2. *Almighty God, who haſt given thine onely Son, to be unto us, both a ſacrifice for ſin, and alſo an enſample of godly life; give us grace, that we may always moſt thankfully receive that his ineſtimable benefit; and alſo daily endeavour our ſelves to follow the bleſſed ſteps of his moſt holy life, through the ſame* Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen.

SERMON IV.

Of Submiſſion to the Divine Will.

LUKE 22. 42.

Matt. 26. 39. *Nevertheleſs let not my will, but thine be done.*

THE great controverſie, managed with ſuch earneſtneſs and obſtinacy between God and Man, is this, whoſe will ſhall take place, his or ours: Almighty God, by whoſe conſtant protection and great mercy we ſubſiſt, doth claim to himſelf the authority of regulating our practice, and diſpoſing our fortunes; but we affect to be our own Maſters and Carvers; not willingly admitting any Law, not patiently brooking any Condition, which doth not ſort with our

our fancy and pleasure: to make good his right, God bendeth all his forces, and applieth all proper means both of sweetness and severity (perswading us by arguments, soliciting us by entreaties, alluring us by fair promises, scaring us by fierce menaces, indulging ample benefits to us, inflicting sore corrections on us, working in us and upon us by secret influences of grace, by visible dispensations of Providence) yet so it is, that commonly nothing doth avail, our will opposing it self with invincible resolution and stiffness.

Here indeed the business pincheth; herein as the chief worth, so the main difficulty of religious practice consisteth, in bending *that iron sinew*; in bringing our proud hearts to stoop, and our sturdy humours to buckle, so as to surrender and resign our wills to the just, the wise, the gracious will of our God, prescribing out duty, and assigning our lot unto us. We may accuse our nature, but it is our pleasure; we may pretend weakness, but it is wilfulness, which is the guilty cause of our misdemeanours; for by God's help (which doth alwaies prevent our needs, and is never wanting to those who seriously desire it) we may be as good as we please, if we can please to be good; there is nothing within us that can resist, if our wills do yeild themselves up to duty: to conquer our reason is not hard; for what reason of man can withstand the infinite cogency of those motives, which induce to obedience? What can be more easie, than by a thousand arguments, clear as day, to convince any man, that to cross God's will is the greatest absurdity in the world, and that there is no madness comparable thereto? Nor is it difficult, if we resolve upon it, to govern any other part or power of our nature; for what cannot we do, if we are willing? what inclination cannot we check, what appetite cannot we restrain, what passion cannot we quell or moderate; what faculty of our soul, or member of our body is not obsequious to our will? Even half the resolution with which we pursue vanity and sin, would serve to engage us in the ways of wisdom and vertue.

Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 12. *in* 1 Cor. *Or.* 17. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 28; 43.

Quodcunque sibi imperavit animus obtinuit. Sen. *de Ira.* 2. 12.

Wherefore in overcoming our will the stress lieth; this is that impregnable fortress, which everlastingly doth hold out against all the batteries of reason and of grace; which no force of perswasion, no allurement of favour, no discouragement of terrour can reduce: this puny, this impotent thing it is, which grappleth with Omnipotency, and often in a manner baffleth it: And no wonder; for that God doth not intend to overpower our will, or to make any violent impression on it, but onely to *draw it* (as it is in the *Prophet*) *with the cords of a man*, or by rational inducements to win its consents and compliance; our service is not so considerable to him, that he should extort it from us; nor doth he value our happiness at so low a rate, as to obtrude it on us. His victory indeed were no true victory over us, if he should gain it by main force, or without the concurrence of our will; our works not being our works, if they do not issue from our will; and our will not being our will, if it be not free; to compel it were to destroy it, together with all the worth of our vertue and obedience: wherefore the Almighty doth suffer himself to be withstood, and beareth repulses from us; nor commonly doth he master our will otherwise, than by its own spontaneous conversion and submission to him: if ever we be conquer'd, as we shall share in the benefit, and wear a crown; so we must join in the combat, and partake of the victory, by subduing our selves: *we must take the yoke upon us*; for God is onely served by volunteers; he summoneth us by his Word, he attracteth us by his Grace, but we must *freely come unto him.*

Hos. 11. 4.

Ἐπεὶ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὰ διαδάλλει τὰ ἀγαθὰ εἰ μὴ τοιαύτη αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ φύσις, ὡς καὶ ἑκόντας προσδέχεσθαι, καὶ χάριν ἔχειν πολλήν. Chrys. *in* 1 Cor. *Orat.* 2.

Our will indeed of all things is moſt our own; the onely gift, the moſt proper ſacrifice we have to offer; which therefore God doth chiefly deſire, doth moſt highly prize, doth moſt kindly accept from us. Seeing then our duty chiefly moveth on this hinge, the free ſubmiſſion and reſignation of our will to the will of God; it is this practice, which our Lord (who came to guide us in the way to happineſs, not onely as a teacher by his word and excellent doctrine, but as a leader, by his actions and perfect example) did eſpecially ſet before us; as in the conſtant tenour of his life, ſo particularly in that great exigency which occaſioned theſe words, wherein, renouncing and deprecating his own will, he did expreſs an entire ſubmiſſion to God's will, a hearty complacence therein, and a ſerious deſire that it might take place.

For the fuller underſtanding of which caſe, we may conſider, that our Lord, as partaker of our nature, and, *in all things* (bating ſin) *like unto us*, had a natural humane will, attended with ſenſes, appetites and affections, apt from objects incident to receive congruous impreſſions of pleaſure and pain; ſo that whatever is innocently grateful and pleaſant to us, that he reliſh'd with delight, and thence did incline to embrace; whatever is diſtaſtful and afflictive to us, that he reſented with grief, and thence was moved to eſchew; to this probably he was liable in a degree beyond our ordinary rate; for that in him nature was moſt perfect, his complection very delicate, his temper exquiſitely ſound and fine; for ſo we find, that by how much any man's conſtitution is more ſound, by ſo much he hath a ſmarter guſt of what is agreeable or offenſive to nature: If perhaps ſometimes infirmity of body, or diſtemper of ſoul (a ſavage ferity, a ſtupid dulneſs, a fondneſs of conceit, or ſtiffneſs of humour, ſupported by wild opinions, or vain hopes) may keep men from being thus affected by ſenſible objects; yet in him pure nature did work vigorouſly, with a clear apprehenſion and lively ſenſe, according to the deſign of our maker, when into our conſtitution he did implant thoſe paſſive faculties, diſpoſing objects to affect them ſo and ſo, for our need and advantage; if this be deemed weakneſs, it is a weakneſs connexed with our nature, which he therewith did take, and *with which* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *he was encompaſſed.* Such a will our Lord had, and it was requiſite he ſhould have it; that he thence might be qualified to diſcharge the principal inſtances of obedience, for procuring God's favour to us, and for ſetting an exact pattern before us; for God impoſing on him duties to perform, and diſpenſing accidents to endure, very croſs to that natural will, in his compliance and acquieſcence thereto, his obedience was throughly tried; his vertue did ſhine moſt brightly; therefore (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *he was in all points tempted*; thence, as to meritorious capacity, and exemplary influence, *he was perfected through ſuffering.*

Ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς περίκειται ἀσθένειαν. Heb. 5. 2.

Heb. 4. 15. 2. 10, 18.

Hence was the whole courſe of his life and converſation among men, ſo deſigned, ſo modelled, as to be one continual exerciſe of thwarting that humane will, and cloſing with the divine pleaſure: it was predicted of him, *Loe I come to do thy will O God*; and of himſelf he affirmed, *I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me*; whereas therefore ſuch a practice is little ſeen in atchieving eaſie matters, or in admitting pleaſant occurrences; it was ordered for him, that he ſhould encounter the roughеſt difficulties, and be engaged in circumſtances, moſt harſh to natural apprehenſion and appetite; ſo that if we trace the footſteps of his life from the ſordid manger to the bloody croſs, we can hardly mark any thing to have befallen him apt to ſatisfy the will of nature. Nature liketh reſpect, and loatheth contempt; therefore was he

Heb. 10. 7. Pſal. 40. 7. Joh. 6. 38. 5. 30. 4. 34.

he born of mean Parentage, and in a moſt homely condition; therefore did he live in no garb, did aſſume no office, did exerciſe no power, did meddle in no affairs, which procure to men conſideration and regard; therefore an impoſtor, a blaſphemer, a ſorcerer, a looſe companion, a ſeditious incendiary were the titles of honour, and the elogies of praiſe conferred on him; therefore was he expoſed to the laſh of every ſlanderous, every ſcurrilous, every petulant and ungoverned tongue.

Nature doth affect the good opinion, and good will of men, eſpecially when due in grateful return for great courteſie and beneficence; nor doth any thing more grate thereon, than abuſe of kindneſs; therefore, could he (the world's great friend and benefactor) ſay, *the world hateth me*; Joh. 5. 18,25.
therefore were thoſe, whom he, with ſo much charity and bounty had inſtructed, had fed, had cured of diſeaſes (both corporal and ſpiritual) ſo ready to clamour, and commit outrage upon him; therefore could he thus expoſtulate, *Many good works have I ſhewed you from my father, for* Joh. 10. 31.
which of thoſe works do ye ſtone me? therefore did his kindred ſlight him, therefore did his diſciples abandon him, therefore did the grand traitor iſſue from his own boſome; therefore did that whole Nation, which he chiefly ſought and laboured to ſave, conſpire to perſecute him, with moſt Joh. 13. 18.
rancorous ſpite and cruel miſuſage.

Nature loveth plentiful accommodations, and abhorreth to be pinched with any want; therefore was extream penury appointed to him; he had no revenue, no eſtate, no certain livelyhood, not *ſo much as a houſe* Mat. 8. 20.
where to lay his head, or a piece of money to diſcharge the tax for it; he 17. 25. 21. 19.
owed his ordinary ſupport to alms, or voluntary beneficence; he was to Luc. 8. 3.
ſeek his food from *a fig-tree on the way*; and ſometimes was beholden for it to the courteſie of Publicans; δι ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσε, *he was* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *a* 2 Cor. 8. 9.
beggar for us.

Nature delighteth in eaſe, in quiet, in liberty; therefore did he ſpend his days in continual labour, in reſtleſs travel, in endleſs vagrancy, *going* Joh. 4. 16.
about and doing good; ever haſtening thither, whither the needs of men Matt. 4. 23. 8. 35.
did call, or their benefit invite; therefore did he *take on him the form of a* Act. 10. 38.
ſervant, and was among his own followers *as one that miniſtreth*; there- Phil. 2. 7.
fore he *pleaſed not himſelf*, but ſuited his demeanour to the ſtate and cir- Luc. 22. 27. Marc. 6. 6.
cumſtances of things, complied with the manners and faſhions, compor- Matt. 21. 28.
ted with the humours and infirmities of men.

Nature coveteth good ſucceſs to its deſign and undertakings, hardly brooking to be diſappointed and defeated in them: therefore was he put to water dry ſticks, and to waſh *Negroes*; that is, to inſtruct a moſt dull and ſtupid, to reform a moſt perverſe and ſtubborn generation; therefore his ardent deſires, his ſolicitous cares, his painful endeavours for the good of men did obtain ſo little fruit; had indeed a contrary effect, rather aggravating their ſins than removing them, rather hardening than turning their hearts, rather plunging them deeper into perdition, than reſcuing them from it: therefore ſo much in vain did he, in numberleſs miraculous works, diſplay his power and goodneſs, convincing few, converting fewer by them; therefore although he taught with moſt powerful authority, with moſt charming gracefulneſs, with moſt convincing evi- Luc. 4. 22,23.
dence, yet, *Who* (could he ſay) *hath believed our report*? though he Joh. 12. 38.
moſt earneſtly did invite and allure men to him, offering the richeſt boons that heaven it ſelf could diſpenſe, yet, *Ye will not* (was he forced to ſay) Joh. 5. 40.
come unto me, that ye may be ſaved; although with aſſiduous fervency of affection he ſtrove to reclaim them from courſes tending to their ruin, yet how he proſpered, ſad experience declareth, and we may learn from that doleful

Luc. 13. 34. 19. 42. doleful complaint, *How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not :* οὐκ ἠθελήσατε, your will did not concur, your will did not ſubmit.

Marc. 1. 13, 35. Luc. 5. 16. Joh. 4. 6, 31. Luc 6. 12. Matt. 14. 23. In fine, natural will ſeeketh pleaſure, and ſhunneth pain; But what pleaſure did he taſt; what inclination, what appetite, what ſenſe did he gratifie? How did he feaſt, or revel? How, but in tedious faſtings, in frequent hungers, by paſſing whole nights in prayer, and retirement for devotion upon the cold mountains? What ſports had he, what recreation

18. 12. did he take, but feeling inceſſant gripes of compaſſion, and wearieſome roving in queſt of the loſt ſheep? In what converſation could he divert himſelf, but among thoſe, whoſe doltiſh incapacity and forward humour,

17. 17. did wring from his patience thoſe words, *How long ſhall I be with you, how long ſhall I ſuffer you?* What Muſick did he hear? What but the ratlings of clamorous obloquy, and furious accuſations againſt him? to be deſperately maligned, to be inſolently mocked, to be ſtiled a King, and treated as a ſlave; to be ſpit on, to be buffetted, to be ſcourged, to be drenched with gall, to be crowned with thorns, to be nailed to a croſs; theſe were the delights which our Lord enjoyed, theſe the ſweet comforts of his life, and the notable proſperities of his fortune: ſuch a portion was allotted to him, the which he did accept from God's hand with all patient ſubmiſſion, with perfect contentedneſs, with exceeding alacrity, never repining at it, never complaining of it, never flinching from it, or fainting under it; but proceeding on in the performance of all his duty, and proſecution of his great deſigns, with undaunted courage, with unwearied induſtry, with undiſturbed tranquillity and ſatisfaction of mind.

Had indeed his condition and fortune been otherwiſe framed; had he come into the world qualified with a noble extraction; had he lived in a ſplendid equipage, had he enjoyed a plentiful eſtate and a fair reputation, had he been favoured and careſſed by men; had he found a current of proſperous ſucceſs, had ſafety, eaſe and pleaſure waited on him; Where had been the pious reſignation of his will; where the precious merit of his obedience; where the glorious luſtre of his example? how then had our frailty in him become victorious over all its enemies; how had he triumphed over the ſolicitations and allurements of the fleſh; over the frowns and flatteries of the world; over the malice and fury of hell; how then could he have ſo demonſtrated his immenſe charity toward us, or laid ſo mighty obligations upon us?

Such in general was the caſe, and ſuch the deportment of our Lord; but there was ſomewhat peculiar, and beyond all this occurring to him, which drew forth the words of our Text: God hath tempered for him a potion of all the moſt bitter and loathſome ingredients that could be; a drop whereof no man ever hath, or could indure to ſip; for he was not onely to undergo whatever load humane rage could impoſe, of ignominious diſgrace, and grievous pain; but to feel diſmal agonies of Spirit, and thoſe *unknown ſufferings*, which God alone could inflict, God onely could ſuſtain: *Behold, and ſee*, he might well ſay, *if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, which is done unto me; wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*? He was to labour with pangs of Charity, and through his heart to be pierced with deepeſt commiſeration of our wretched caſe: he was to crouch under the burthen of all the ſins (the numberleſs moſt heinous ſins and abominations) ever committed by mankind: he was to paſs through the hotteſt furnace of Divine Vengeance, and by his blood to quench the wrath of Heaven flaming out againſt iniquity; he was to ſtand (as it were) before the mouth of Hell, belching

Δι' ἀγνώστων σου παθημάτων ἔλεησον ἡμᾶς κύριε. Lit. Gr. Lam. 2. 12.

fire

fire and brimſtone on his face: his grief was to ſupply the defects of our remorſe, and his ſuffering in thoſe few moments to countervail the eternal torments due to us: He was to bear the hiding of God's face, and an eclipſe of that favourable aſpect, in which all bliſs doth reſide; a caſe which he that ſo perfectly underſtood, could not but infinitely reſent: theſe things with the cleareſt apprehenſion he ſaw coming on him; and no wonder that our nature ſtarted at ſo ghaſtly a ſight; or that humane inſtinct ſhould dictate that petition, *Father if thou wilt, let this cup paſs from me*; words implying his moſt real participation of our infirmity; words denoting the height of thoſe ſad evils which encompaſſed him with his lively and lowly reſentment of them; words informing us, how we ſhould entertain God's chaſtiſements, and whence we muſt ſeek relief of our preſſures (that we ſhould receive them, not with a ſcornful neglect or ſullen inſenſibility, but with a meek contrition of ſoul; that we ſhould entirely depend on God's pleaſure for ſupport under them, or a releaſement from them); words which in conjunction with thoſe following do ſhew how inſtantly we ſhould quaſh and over-rule any inſurrection of natural deſire againſt the command or providence of God. We muſt not take that prayer to ſignify any purpoſe in our Lord to ſhift off his paſſion, or any wavering in reſolution about it; for he could not any wiſe mean to undo that, which he knew done with God before the world's foundation; he would not unſettle that, which was by his own free undertaking, and irreverſible decree; He that ſo often with ſatisfaction did foretel this event, who with ſo *earneſt deſire* longed for its approach; who with that ſharpneſs of indignation did rebuke his friend offering to divert him from it; who did again repreſs St. *Peter*'s animoſity with that ſerious expoſtulation, *The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* who had adviſedly laid ſuch trains for its accompliſhment, would he decline it? Could that heart all burning with zeal for God and charity to men admit the leaſt thought or motion of averſeneſs from drinking that cup, which was the Sovereign medicine adminiſtred by divine wiſdom for the recovery of God's Creation? No; had he ſpake with ſuch intent, legions of Angels had flown to his reſcue; that word, which framed the worlds, which ſtilled the tempeſts, which ejected Devils, would immediately have ſcattered his enemies, and daſhed all their projects againſt him; wherefore thoſe words did not proceed from intention, but as from inſtinct, and for inſtruction; importing, that what our humane frailty was apt to ſuggeſt, that his divine vertue was more ready to ſmother; neither did he vent the former, but that he might expreſs the latter.

Ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα. Luc. 22. 15.

Joh. 18. 11.

Matt. 26. 53.

He did expreſs it in real effect; immediately with all readineſs addreſſing himſelf to receive that unſavoury potion; he reached out his hand for it, yeilding fair opportunity and advantages to his perſecutours; he lifted it up to his mouth, innocently provoking their envy and malice; he drank it off with a moſt ſteady calmneſs, and ſweet compoſure of mind, with the ſilence, the ſimplicity, the meekneſs of a lamb, carried to the ſlaughter; no fretful thought riſing up, no angry word breaking forth, but clear patience, enlivened with a warm charity, ſhining in all his behaviour, and thorough every circumſtance of his paſſion.

Such in his life, ſuch at his death was the practice of our Lord; in conformity whereto we alſo readily ſhould undertake whatever God propoſeth, we gladly ſhould accept whatever God offereth, we vigorouſly ſhould perform whatever God enjoyneth, we patiently ſhould undergo whatever God impoſeth, or inflicteth how croſs ſoever any duty, any diſpenſation may prove to our carnal ſenſe or humour.

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To do thus, the contemplation of this example may ſtrongly engage us, for if our Lord had not his will, can we in reaſon expect, can we in modeſty deſire to have ours? muſt we be cockered and pleaſed in every thing, when as he was treated ſo courſely, and croſſed in all things? can we grutch at any kind of ſervice, or ſufferance; can we think much (for our trial, our exerciſe, our correction) to bear a little want, a little diſgrace, a little pain, when the Son of God was put to diſcharge the hardeſt tasks, to endure the foreſt adverſities?

But farther to enforce theſe duties, be pleaſed to caſt a glance on two conſiderations. 1. What the Will is to which. 2. Who the Willer is to whom we muſt ſubmit.

1. What is the Will of God? Is it any thing unjuſt, unworthy, or diſhonourable, any thing incommodious or hurtful, any thing extremely difficult, or intolerably grievous that God requireth of us, to do or bear? No: he willeth nothing from us, or to us, which doth not beſt become us, and moſt behove us; which is not attended with ſafety, with eaſe, with the ſolideſt profit, the faireſt reputation, and the ſweeteſt pleaſure.

Two things he willeth; that we ſhould be good, and that we ſhould be happy; the firſt in order to the ſecond, for that vertue is the certain way, and a neceſſary qualification to felicity.

1 Theſ. 4. 3. *The will of God,* ſaith St. *Paul, is our ſanctification*; what is that? what, but that the decaies of our frame, and the defacements of God's Image within us ſhould be repaired; that the faculties of our ſoul ſhould be reſtored to their original integrity and vigour; that from moſt wretched ſlaveries we ſhould be tranſlated into a happy freedom, yea, into a glorious kingdom; that from deſpicable beggary and baſeneſs we ſhould be advanced to ſubſtantial Wealth, and ſublime dignity; that we ſhould be cleanſed from the fouleſt defilements, and decked with the goodlieſt ornaments; that we ſhould be cured of moſt loathſome diſeaſes, and ſetled in a firm health of ſoul; that we ſhould be delivered from thoſe brutiſh luſts, and thoſe deviliſh paſſions, which create in us a hell of darkneſs, of confuſion, of vexation; which diſhonour our nature, deform our ſoul, ruffle our mind, and wrack our conſcience; that we ſhould be endowed with thoſe worthy diſpoſitions and affections, which do conſtitute in our hearts a heaven of light, of order, of joy and peace; dignify our nature, beautify our ſoul, clarify and chear our mind; that we ſhould eſchew thoſe practices, which never go without a retinue of woful miſchiefs and ſorrows, embracing thoſe which alwaies yeild abundant fruits of convenience and comfort; that in ſhort, we ſhould become friends of God, fit to converſe with Angels, and capable of Paradiſe.

1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Ezek. 33. 11. *God* (ſaith St. *Paul* again) *willeth all men to be ſaved*; *he willeth not* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *that any man ſhould periſh*; He ſaith in himſelf, yea, he ſweareth it, *that he hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked ſhould turn from his way and live*: And what is this will, what, but that we ſhould obtain all the good whereof we are capable; that we ſhould be filled with joy, and crowned with glory; that we ſhould be fixed in an immoveable ſtate of happineſs, in the perpetual enjoyment of God's favour, and in the light of his bliſsful preſence: that we ſhould be rid of all the evils, to which we are liable; that we ſhould be releaſed from inextricable chains of guilt, from incurable ſtings of remorſe, from being irrecoverably engaged to paſs a diſconſolate eternity in utter darkneſs, and extream Woe? Such is God's Will; to ſuch purpoſes every command, every diſpenſation of God (how grim, how rough ſoever it may ſeem) doth tend: and do we refuſe to comply with that good Will; do

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we ſet againſt it a Will of our own, affecting things unworthy of us, things unprofitable to us, things prejudicial to our beſt intereſts; things utterly baneful to our ſouls? Do we reject the Will that would ſave us, and adhere to a Will that would ruine us; a fooliſh and a ſenſeleſs Will, which ſlighting the immenſe treaſures of Heaven, the unfading glories of God's Kingdom, the ineffable joys of eternity doth catch at ſpecious nothings, doth purſue miſchievous trifles; a ſhadow of baſe profit, a ſmoak of vain honour, a flaſh of ſordid pleaſure; which paſſeth away like *the mirth of fools*, or *the crackling of thorns*, leaving onely ſoot, black and bitter behind it. Eccleſ. 7. 6.

But at leaſt e'er we do thus, let us conſider, whoſe Will it is, that requireth our compliance.

It is the Will of Him, whoſe Will did found the earth, and rear the Heaven; whoſe Will ſuſtaineth all things in their exiſtence and operation; whoſe Will is the great law of the World, which univerſal nature in all its motions doth obſerve; which reigneth in Heaven, the bleſſed Spirits adoring it, which ſwayeth in Hell it ſelf, the curſed Fiends trembling at it; And ſhall we alone (we pitiful Worms crawling on earth) preſume to murmur, or dare to kick againſt it? Pſal. 148. 5. Apoc. 4. 11.

It is the Will of our Maker, vvho together vvith all our other faculties did create and confer on us, the very povver of Willing: and ſhall vve turn the Work of his hands, the gift of his bounty againſt him?

It is the Will of our Preſerver, vvho together vvith all that vve are, or have continually, doth uphold our very Will it ſelf; ſo that vvithout employing any poſitive force, merely by letting us fall out of his hand, he can ſend us and it back to nothing: and ſhall our Will claſh vvith that, on vvhich it ſo vvholly dependeth; vvithout vvhich it cannot ſubſiſt one moment, or move one ſtep forvvard in action?

It is the Will of our Sovereign Lord, vvho upon various indiſputable accounts hath a juſt right to govern us, and an abſolute povver to diſpoſe of us: ought vve not therefore to ſay vvith old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do to me as it ſeems good to him*? Is it not extream iniquity, is it not monſtrous arrogance for us, in derogation to his Will, to pretend giving lavv, or picking a ſtation to our ſelves? Do vve not manifeſtly incur high treaſon againſt the King of Heaven by ſo invading his office, uſurping his authority, ſnatching his Sceptre into our hands, and ſetting our Wills in his Throne? 1 Sam. 3. 8.

It is the Will of our Judge, from whoſe mouth our doom muſt proceed, awarding Life or Death, Weal or Woe unto us; and what ſentence can we expect, what favour can we pretend to, if we preſumptuouſly ſhall offend, oppoſe that Will, which is the ſupream Rule of Juſtice, and ſole Fountain of Mercy?

It is the Will of our Redeemer, who hath bought us with an ineſtimable price, and with infinite pains hath reſcued us from miſerable Captivity under moſt barbarous enemies, that obeying his VVill we might command our own, and ſerving him we might enjoy perfect freedom; And ſhall we, declining his call and conduct out of that unhappy ſtate bereave him of his purchaſe, fruſtrate his undertakings, and forfeit to our ſelves the benefit of ſo great Redemption?

It is the VVill of our beſt friend; who loveth us much better, than we do love our ſelves; who is concerned for our welfare, as his own deareſt intereſt, and greatly delighteth therein; who by innumerable experiments hath demonſtrated an exceſs of kindneſs to us; who in all his dealings with us purely doth aim at our good, never charging any duty on us, or

diſpenſing any event to us, ſo much with intent to exerciſe his power
Lam. 3. 39. over us, as to expreſs his goodneſs towards us; who never *doth afflict or grieve us* more againſt our Will, than againſt his own deſire; never indeed but when goodneſs it ſelf calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto; to whom we are much obliged, that he vouchſafeth to govern and guide us, our ſervice being altogether unprofitable to him, his governance exceedingly beneficial to us: And doth not ſuch a Will deſerve regard, may it not demand compliance from us? to neglect or infringe it, what is it? is it not palpable folly, is it not foul diſingenuity, is it not deteſtable ingratitude?

So doth every relation of God recommend his Will to us; and each of his Attributes doth no leſs: for,

It is the Will of him, who is moſt holy, or whoſe Will is eſſential rectitude: how then can we thwart it, without being ſtained with the guilt, and wounded with a ſenſe of great irregularity and iniquity?

It is the Will of him who is perfectly juſt; who therefore cannot but aſſert his own righteous Will, and avenge the violation thereof: is it then adviſeable to drive him to that point by wilful provocation; or to run upon the edge of neceſſary ſeverity?

It is the Will of him, who is infinitely wiſe; who therefore doth infallibly know what is beſt for us, what doth moſt befit our capacities and circumſtances; what in the final reſult will conduce to our greateſt advantage and comfort: ſhall we then prefer the dreams of our vain mind before the oracles of his Wiſdom; ſhall we forſaking the direction of his unerring Will follow the impulſe of our giddy humour?

It is the Will of him, who is immenſely good and benign; whoſe Will therefore can be no other than good Will to us; who can mean nothing thereby but to derive bounty and mercy on us: Can we then fail of doing well, if we put our ſelves entirely into his hands; are we not our own greateſt enemies, in withſtanding his gracious intentions?

It is finally the Will of him, who is uncontrollably powerful; whoſe Will therefore muſt prevail one way or other: either with our Will, or againſt it, either ſo as to bow and ſatisfy us, or ſo as to break and plague
Ma. 46. 11. us: for *My counſel* (ſaith he) *ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure.* As to his diſpenſations, we may fret, we may wail, we may bark at them, but we cannot alter or avoid them: ſooner may we by our moans check the tides, or by our cries ſtop the Sun in his carriere, than divert the current of affairs, or change the ſtate of things eſtabliſhed by God's high decree; what he layeth on, no hand can remove; what he hath deſtined, no power can reverſe; our anger therefore will be ineffectual, our impatience will have no other fruit, than to aggravate our guilt, and augment our grief.

Dan. 5. 23. As to his commands, we may *lift up our ſelves againſt him*, we may fight ſtoutly, we may in a ſort prove Conquerors; but it will be a miſerable victory, the Trophies whereof ſhall be erected in Hell, and ſtand upon the ruines of our happineſs; for while we inſult over abuſed grace, we muſt fall under incenſed juſtice: If God cannot fairly procure his Will of us in way of due obedience, he will ſurely execute his Will upon us in way of righteous vengeance; if we do not ſurrender our Wills to the overtures of his goodneſs, we muſt ſubmit our backs to the ſtroaks of his anger: He muſt reign over us, if not as over loyal Subjects to our comfort, yet as over ſtubborn Rebels to our confuſion; for this in that caſe will be our doom, and the laſt words God will deſign to ſpend upon us,

Thoſe

Thoſe mine enemies, which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me. Luc. 19. 27.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great Shepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt; to whom be glory for ever and ever: Amen. Heb. 13. 20.

SERMON V.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever ſtate I am, therewith to be content. Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμὶ αὐτάρκης εἶναι.

IN theſe words by the example of an eminent Saint is recommended to us the practice of an excellent duty, or vertue: a practice in it ſelf moſt worthy, very grateful to God, and immediately of great benefit to our ſelves; being indeed neceſſary towards the comfortable enjoyment of our lives: It is Contentedneſs, the vertue, which of all other doth moſt render this World acceptable, and conſtituteth a kind of temporal Heaven; which he that hath, is thereby *ipſo facto* in good meaſure happy, whatever other things he may ſeem to want; which he that wanteth, doth, however otherwiſe he be furniſhed, become miſerable, and carrieth a kind of Hell within him: it cannot therefore but well deſerve our beſt ſtudy about it, and care to get it; in imitation of St. *Paul*, who *had learned in whatever ſtate he was therein to be content.* Τὸ δ' αὐτάρκες πάσῃ, ὃ μονάδων αἱρετὸν ποιεῖ ἢ βίον καὶ μηδενὸς ἐνδεᾶ. Ariſt. Eth. l. 7.

In diſcourſing upon which words I ſhall conſider two particulars; firſt the vertue it ſelf (Contentedneſs in every ſtate) the nature of which I ſhall endeavour to explain; then the way of attaining or producing it, implied by St. *Paul* in the words, *I have learned.*

I. For explication of the vertue: The word here expreſſing it is, αὐτάρκεια, which ſignifieth ſelf-ſufficiency, or having enough of ones ſelf; the which is not to be underſtood abſolutely, as if he took himſelf to be independent in nature, able to ſubſiſt of himſelf, not wanting any ſupport or comfort without himſelf (for this is the property and privilege of the great *El-ſhaddai*, who alone ſubſiſteth of himſelf, needing toward his being and felicity nothing without himſelf? this is repugnant to the nature of man, who is a creature eſſentially dependent for his being and ſubſiſtence, indigent of many things for his ſatisfaction and welfare) but relatively conſidering his preſent ſtate, the circumſtances wherein he was, and the capacities he had; which by Gods diſpoſal and providence were ſuch, that he could not want more, than he had in his poſſeſſion, or Τὸ δ' ἀλλοτρίων ἀπέχειν δεῖ πάντα ἃ δέλει πεπληρωμένῳ πνι εἶναι ὑπάρχοντα· δῆλος δεῖ φερσεῖναι, ἐὰν λιμόν. Arr. 3. 24.

reach. He meant not to exclude God, and his Providence; but rather ſuppoſed that as the ground and cauſe of his ſelf-ſufficiency; according
2 Cor. 3. 5. as otherwhere he expreſſeth it: *Not as if we were ſufficient of our ſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God*: Nor did he intend to exclude the need of other creatures otherwiſe than as conſidered without his poſſeſſion, or beyond his power; But he meaneth onely, that he did not deſire or lack more than what God had ſupplyed him with; had put into his hand, or had ſet within his reach; that his will did ſuit to his ſtate, his deſire did not exceed his power.

This is the meaning of the word, which the Apoſtle uſeth; but for the more full and clear underſtanding the vertue it ſelf, we ſhall firſt conſider the object, about which it is converſant, then the ſeveral acts, which it requireth, or wherein the exerciſe thereof conſiſteth.

1. The object of contentedneſs is the preſent ſtate of things whatever it be (whether proſperous or adverſe, of eminency or meanneſs, of abundance or ſcantneſs) wherein by divine Providence we are ſet: τὰ ἐν οἷς ἐσμὲν, *the things in which we are*, that is our preſent condition, with all its circumſtances: ſo it may be generally ſuppoſed, conſidering that it is ordinary, and almoſt natural for men (who have not learned as St. *Paul* had done, or are not inſtructed, and exerciſed in the practice of this duty) to be diſſatisfied, and diſquieted in every ſtate; to be always in want of ſomething; to find defects in every fortune; to fancy they may be in better caſe, and to deſire it earneſtly: If we eſtimate things wiſely, rich men are more liable to diſcontent then poor men. It is obſervable, that proſperity is a peeviſh thing, and men of higheſt fortune are apt moſt eaſily to reſent the ſmalleſt things: a little neglect, a ſlight word, an unpleaſing look doth affect them more than reproaches, blows, wrongs, do thoſe of a mean condition.

Proſperity is a nice and ſqueamiſh thing, and it is hard to find any thing able to pleaſe men of a full and proſperous ſtate, which being uncapable of bettering in ſubſtantial things they can hardly find matter of ſolid delight. Whereas a poor eſtate is eaſily comforted by the acceſſion of many things which it wanteth: a good meal, a ſmall gift, a little gain, or good ſucceſs of his labour doth greatly pleaſe a poor man with a very ſolid pleaſure: but a rich man hath nothing to pleaſe him, but a new toy, a puff of applauſe, ſucceſs at a horſe-race, at bowls, at hunting; in ſome petty ſport and paſtime, which can yeild but a very thin and tranſitory ſatisfaction to any man not quite brutified and void of ſenſe: whence contentedneſs hath place, and is needful in every condition, be it in ap-
Job 20. 22. pearance never ſo proſperous, ſo plentiful, ſo pleaſant. *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiencies, he ſhall be in ſtraits.*

Chryſ. *Tom.* 7. *p.* 68. The formal object thereof may indeed ſeem to be a condition diſtaſtful to our ſenſe, or croſs to our fancy; an adverſe or ſtrait condition; a condition of Poverty, of diſgrace, of any great inconvenience or diſtreſs incident to us in this World; but ſince the moſt men are abſolutely in ſuch a condition, expoſed to ſo many wants and troubles; ſince many more are needy comparatively, wanting the conveniencies that others enjoy, and which themſelves affect; ſince there are few, who in right eſtimation are not indigent and poor, that is, who do not deſire and fancy themſelves to want many things which they have not (for wealth conſiſteth not ſo much in the poſſeſſion of goods, as in apprehenſion of freedom from want, and in ſatisfaction of deſires) ſince care, trouble, diſappointment, ſatiety and diſcontent following them, do not onely haunt cottages, and ſtick to the loweſt ſort of people, but do even frequent palaces, and

purſue

purſue men of higheſt rank; therefore any ſtate may be the object of contentedneſs; and the duty is of a very general concernment; Princes themſelves need to learn it; the leſſons teaching it, and the arguments perſwading it may as well ſuit the rich and noble, as the poor and the peaſant; ſo our *Apoſtle* himſelf doth intimate in the words immediately following our Text: *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound; Every where, and in all things I am inſtructed both to be full, and to be hungry: both to abound and to ſuffer need*; he had the art not onely to manage well both conditions, but to be ſatisfied in either. Phil. 4. 12.

But ſeeing real adverſity, poverty and diſgrace have naturally the ſtrongeſt influence in diſturbing and diſordering our minds; that contentedneſs is plainly moſt needful in ſuch caſes, as the proper ſupport, or medicine of our mind in them; that other ſtates do need it onely as they, by fancy or infirmity, do ſymbolize or conſpire with theſe; therefore unto perſons in theſe ſtates we ſhall more explicitely apply our directions, and perſwaſions, as to the proper and primary ſubjects of contentedneſs; the which by analogy, or parity of reaſon may be extended to all others who by imaginary wants and diſtreſſes do create diſpleaſure to themſelves. So much for the object, or the ſubject, of the vertue.

2. The acts, wherein the practice thereof conſiſteth (which are neceſſary ingredients, or conſtant ſymptoms of it) belong either to the mind and underſtanding, or to the will and appetite, or to external demeanour and practice; being 1. right opinions and judgments of mind, 2. fit diſpoſitions and affections of heart, 3. outward good actions and behaviours, in regard to our condition and the events befalling us; the former being as the root and ſtock, the latter as the fruits and the flowers of the duty: unto which may be reduced the correſpondent negations, or abſence of bad judgments, affections and deportments in reſpect to the ſame objects.

(1.) As to our opinions and judgments of things contentedneſs requireth, that

1. We ſhould believe our condition whatever it be to be determined by God, and that all events befalling us, do proceed from him; at leaſt that he permitteth and ordereth them, according to his judgment and pleaſure: that Ξὺν τῷ θεῷ πᾶς καὶ γελᾷ κἀδυρᾶται, all (as the *Prophet* ſingeth, *both good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the moſt High*; that *affliction* (as *Job* ſaid) *cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; as a thing ariſing ſpontaneouſly, or ſowed by the hand of ſome creature, but rather deſcendeth from him, who ſaith, *I form the light, and create darkneſs*; *I make peace, and create evil*; *I the Lord do all theſe things.* Soph. Aj. *Lor.* Lam. 3. 38. Amos 3. 6. 1 Kings 12. 15, 24. Eſ. 45. 7.

We are apt, when any thing falleth out unpleaſant to us, to exclaim againſt fortune, and to accuſe our ſtars; or to inveigh againſt the ſecond cauſes which immediately offend us, aſcribing all to their influence; which proceeding in us doth argue in us a *Heatheniſh* ignorance and infidelity, or at leaſt much inconſiderateneſs, and impotency of mind; that our judgment is blinded and clouded, or perverted and ſeduced by ill paſſions; for that in truth there is not in the world any occurrence meerly fortuitous, or fatal (all being guided and weilded by the powerful hand of the All-wiſe, and Almighty God) there is no creature which in its agency doth not depend upon God, as the inſtrument of his will, or ſubordinate thereto; wherefore upon every event we ſhould, raiſing our minds above all other cauſes, diſcern and acknowledge God's hand; as *David* did, when *Shimei* curſed him; *Let him* (ſaid the good King) *curſe because the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; as *Job* did when he was rifled of his goods, *The Lord* (ſaid he) *gave, and the Lord hath taken away*; *Atque Deos atque aſtra vocat crudelia mater.* 2 Sam. 16. 10. Job 1. 21.

way; as our Saviour did, when in regard to the ſore hardſhips he was de-
Joh. 18. 11. ſigned to undergo, he ſaid, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink.*

2. Hence we ſhould always judge every thing which happeneth to be throughly good and fit, worthy (all things conſidered) to be appointed, or permitted by that Governour of things; not entertaining any harſh thoughts of God, as if he were not enough wiſe, juſt, or benign in ordering us to be afflicted or croſſed; but taking all occurrences to be well conſiſtent with all God's holy Perfections and Attributes.

Παρεχωρήσαμεν τοίνυν παρακαλῶ τῷ σοφῷ τῶ παντὸς κυβερνήτῃ καὶ στέξομεν τὰ οἰκονομήματα ὁποῖα ποτ' ἂν ᾖ καὶν δυσκόλη, καὶν λυπηρὰ. &c. Theod. Ep. 136.

We are apt to conceit, that the World is ill ordered, when we do not thrive and proſper therein; that every thing is irregular, which ſquareth not to the models of our fancies; that things had gone much better, if our deſigns had found ſucceſs; but theſe are vain and perverſe conceits; for that certainly is moſt good, which ſeemeth good to God; his will is a perfect ſtandard of right, and convenience, his eye never aimeth wrong, his hand never faileth to hit the mark of what is beſt; *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*: So did King *Hezekiah* rightly judge, when upon denunciation of a ſad doom to his countrey and poſterity, he replied to the Prophet, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken*; ſo even the *Pagan* Sage diſcerned, when he thus rebuked a male-content; *You ſlave, do you forſooth deſire any thing, but what is beſt? and is not that onely beſt, which ſeemeth beſt to God?*

Placeat homini quicquid Deo placuit, Sen. Ep. 75.

Στέργειν δὲ χρὴ τὰ θεῖα τῆς ἀῤῥήτου σοφίας περιλαμβάνοντα, καὶ ταῦτα πάντως νομίζειν συμφέροντα. Theod. Ep 15.
Οἶδε γὰρ ὡς σοφὸς τὸ συμφέρον, καὶ ὡς ἀγαθὸς τοῦτο ἡμῖν χαρίσεται. Id. Ep. 18.

Pſal. 25. 10. 145. 17.
2 Kings 20. 19.

Ἀνδράποδον ἄλλο γὰρ θέλεις, ἢ τὸ ἄμεινον; ἄλλο δὲ τῷ πάμεινον, ἢ τὸ δοκοῦν; Arr. II. 7.

3. We ſhould even be ſatisfied in our mind that according to God's purpoſe all events do tend and conduce to our particular welfare; being not onely good to us as members of the world, and in order to more general ends, but ſerving towards our private benefit and advantage. We may be ready perhaps to confeſs, that whatever happeneth may be indeed juſt and fit in ſome diſtant, and occult reſpects, but hardly can we be induced to allow, that what we feel offenſive to our ſenſe or fancy, is really good for us, or was meant for our benefit; we cannot eaſily diſcern any thing of love or favour in ſuch matters: Thoſe ſort of *Aphoriſms*, in Holy Scripture, *Happy is the man whom God correcteth*; *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten*; ſound ſtrangely, and are huge *Paradoxes* to us; ſuch is our blindneſs of mind, and dulneſs of apprehenſion: but God knoweth with ſo exact a skilfulneſs to manage things, that every particular occurrence ſhall be advantageous to the perſon, whom it toucheth; and accordingly to each one he diſpenſeth that which is moſt ſuitable to him; whence, as frequently it is neceſſary for our good that we ſhould be croſſed (for that indeed otherwiſe we ſhould often much harm, ſometimes we ſhould quite undo our ſelves) ſo it alwayes, when God ſo ordereth it, is to be deemed moſt profitable and wholeſome for us: we are therefore in reaſon obliged to take the ſaddeſt accidents, and ſharpeſt afflictions, coming upon us by providence, to be no other than fatherly corrections, or friendly rebukes, deſigned to render us good and happy; as arguments therefore and inſtances of eſpecial good-will toward us; conceiving under every diſpenſation that we do as it were hear God ſpeaking to us, as he did to thoſe in the *Prophet*: *I know the thoughts, that I think toward you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

Job 5. 17. Jam. 1. 12. Rev. 3. 19. Prov. 3. 12.

Jer. 29. 11.

4. Hence we are to believe, that our preſent condition (whatever it be

to

to carnal, or worldly ſenſe) is in right judgment, all things conſidered, the beſt; moſt proper, moſt deſirable for us; better than we, if it were at our diſcretion and choice ſhould put our ſelves into: for that God (*the Saviour of all men*, who *deſireth that no man ſhould periſh*; who *is good to all, and whoſe tender mercies are over all his works*; who exceedingly tendereth the welfare of his children and ſubjects) doth ever (here in this life, the time of merit and trial) with a moſt wiſe good-will deſign our beſt good; and by the moſt proper methods (ſuch as do beſt ſuit our circumſtances and capacities) doth aim to draw us unto happineſs; and accordingly doth aſſign a ſtation for us moſt befitting in order to that great end; we therefore ſhould think our ſelves well-placed, becauſe we are where God doth ſet us, that we have enough, becauſe we have what God allotteth us.

1 Tim. 2. 4. Ezek. 33. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Pſal. 145. 9.

There are other more particular judgments, which contentedneſs involveth, or which are required toward it; ſuch as theſe; that nothing originally is due to us, but all cometh purely from divine favour and bounty; that all adverſities are juſtly, and deſervedly inflicted on us, as the due wages, or natural fruits of our ſins; that our happineſs dependeth not on any preſent enjoyments or poſſeſſions, but may well ſubſiſt without them; that a competency (or ſo much as ſufficeth to maintain our life without intolerable pain) ought to ſatisfie our deſires; but theſe, and the like judgments will come opportunely to be conſidered as motives to the practice of the duty.

(2.) From ſuch acts of our mind or intellective parts concerning things incident to us, ſhould proceed the following diſpoſitions of will and affection.

1. We ſhould entertain all occurrences, how grievous ſoever to us, with entire ſubmiſſion, and reſignation of our will to the will of God; wholly acquieſcing in his good pleaſure; ſaying in our hearts after our *Lord*, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*; with *David*, *Behold here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*; even with *Socrates*, *If ſo it pleaſeth God, ſo let it be*; with *Epictetus*, *I always chiefly will that, which cometh to paſs*; *for I account that better which God willeth than what I will my ſelf*; *I will adhere as a miniſter and follower to him, I purſue, I affect, I ſimply will with him*: looking upon them as ſent from God we ſhould heartily bid them welcome, we ſhould kindly embrace them, we ſhould uſe them with all fair reſpect: ἀσπάζεσθαι τὰ συμβαίνοντα (to *hug*, or kindly to *embrace things incident*) φιλεῖν τὰ ἀπονεμόμενα (*to love things diſpenſed by providence*) are precepts, which even as dictated by natural reaſon *Philoſophers* do much inculcate.

Luk. 22. 42. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 26.

Εἰ ταύτῃ θεοῖς φίλον ταύτῃ γενέσθω. Ἀεὶ μᾶλλον θέλω τὸ γινόμενον κρεῖττον γὰρ ἡγοῦμαι ὃ ὁ θεὸς θέλει ἐγὼ· προσκεισομαι διάκονος καὶ ἀκόλουθος ἐκείνῳ συνορμῶ, ὀρέγομαι, ἁπλῶς συνθέλω. Arr. 3. 7.

M. Anton. 3. 4. 2. 17. 10. 11. 12. 1.

This excludeth all rebellious Inſurrection, and ſwellings of mind againſt providence, ſuch as argue that we diſlike Gods government; that were we able we ſhould ſtruggle with Gods will; that we gladly would ſhake off his yoke; all ſuch ill reſentment and repining at our lot, which maketh Gods hand grievous, and his yoke uneaſie to us: ſuch affections as the wiſe man toucheth, when he ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord.*

Prov. 19. 3.

2. We ſhould bear all things with ſteady calmneſs and compoſedneſs of mind, ſuppreſſing, or quelling thoſe tumults, thoſe ſtorms, thoſe exceſſes of paſſion, which the ſenſe of things diſguſtful is apt to excite; ſuch as are immoderate grief, fierce anger, irkſome deſpair, and the like. No adverſity ſhould ſo ruffle our minds, as to defeat and pervert the uſe of our reaſon ſo as to hinder us from perceiving, or performing what becometh us, ſo as to ingage us into any irregular, or unſeemly behaviour.

Let no man be moved by theſe afflictions; μηδένα σαίνεσθαι (*i. e.* θορυβεῖσθαι Chryſ.) 1 Theſſ. 3. 3.

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3. We ſhould indeed bear the worſt events with an εὐθυμία, that is, with a ſweet and chearful diſpoſition of mind, ſo as not to be put out of humour; not to be dejected, or quite diſcouraged by them, not to fall into that *heavineſs*, which (as the *wiſe Man* ſaith) *maketh the heart of man to ſtoop*; but rather finding delight and complacence in them, as conſidering whence they come, whither they aim and tend: ſuch was the diſpoſition and demeanour of the *Apoſtles* and *primitive* good *Chriſtians* in the midſt of their moſt grievous adverſities and ſufferings; *they rejoiced*, &c. they did *take joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, they did *account it all joy, when they fell into divers tribulations*: they were ὡς λυπούμενοι, ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved but alwaies rejoicing*; their ſtate was grievous, but their heart was conſtantly chearful. Such a conſtant frame of mind we ſhould maintain, ſo continually prepared we ſhould be againſt all contingencies, that nothing ſhould happen amiſs to us, ſo as deeply to affect us, or to unſettle us in our humour; that every thing from Gods hand ſhould be acceptable; that no ſadneſs may ſeize on us, at leaſt that we do not indulge or cheriſh it; that in no wiſe we ſuffer any regret to quench that ſpiritual comfort and joy in God; which *becometh the upright* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) and which we are ſo often enjoined perpetually to maintain, as in all caſes, ſo particularly under afflictions and trials. We cannot indeed hardly be content, if we are not chearful; for it is hard to be altogether on the ſuffering and bearing hand, without any pleaſure; the mind can hardly ſtand in a poiſe; ſo as neither to ſorrow or joy: we cannot digeſt adverſity, if we do not reliſh it; we ſhall not ſubmit to it as his will, if we do not take it for an argument of his love: εὐδοκῶ, *I* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *have a liking or pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake; for when I am weak then I am ſtrong.*

Ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται 2 Cor. 7. 10.

Prov. 12. 22.

Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀσθενείαις ἐν ὕβρεσιν ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. 2 Cor. 12. 10.

εἰς πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν μετὰ μακροθυμίας Col. 1. 11.

Acts 5. 41.

Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 6 10.

4. We ſhould with faith and hope rely and wait on God for the removal, or eaſement of our afflictions; or however we ſhould confide in him for grace, and ſtrength to ſupport them well: as our *Saviour* did, when he prayed, *Father, if thou be willing remove this Cup*; as they did in the *Prophet*, who ſaid, *In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have waited on thee*; according to that rule in the *Lamentation*; *It is good that a man ſhould both hope, and wait quietly for the Salvation of the Lord*; and thoſe precepts in the *Pſalms*; *Reſt in the Lord and wait patiently for him*; *wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart.*

Luke 22 42. Iſa. 26. 8. 33. 2. Lam. 3. 26. Pſal. 37. 7. 24. 17. Pſal. 40. 1. 33. 20. 62. 1. 25. 3 69. 6. 44. 19. 16. 8. Pſal. 42. 2.

We ſhould in any caſe be ready with the holy *Pſalmiſt* thus to interrogate, and ſuſtain our ſelves, *Why art thou caſt down, O my Soul, why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, for the help of his countenance.*

2 Pet. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Matt. 6. 25. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 1 Theſ. 4. 13. Iſa. 40. 31. Mic. 7. 7.

Remembring, and conſidering, that (as we are expreſly taught in *Scripture*, and as all our Religion doth clearly ſuppoſe) *God knoweth to reſcue the Godly out of tribulation*, (he knoweth the proper ſeaſon, when it is fit to do it) that *he is faithful, and will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able: but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it*, reflecting, I ſay, on theſe certain points of Chriſtian Truth, we ſhould never *ſorrow as thoſe who are without hope*; we ſhould never deſpair of a good riddance from our adverſity, when it ſhall be ſeaſonable or beneficial for us; we ſhould always be aſſured of a comfortable ſupport under it, which is uſually better than deliverance from it; our minds ſhould never ſink into deſpondency, or diſconſolateneſs: that this

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is practicable in the worſt caſe, we have conſpicuous inſtances to aſſure us; it hath been the practice of moſt illuſtrious and excellent perſons, particularly of the holy *Apoſtles*; never was any condition, in outward reſpects and appearance, more forlorn and diſmal than was theirs; yet in no-wiſe bereaved them of hope, or courage; *We* (they could ſay) *are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair, perſecuted, but not forſaken, caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* 2 Cor. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 11.

5. We ſhould indeed not ſo much as faint, or languiſh in our minds upon any ſuch occaſion; no adverſity ſhould impair the forces of our reaſon or our ſpirit; ſhould enervate our courage, or ſlacken our induſtry; ſhould render us ſick, or weak in heart; for, *If* (ſaith the *wiſe Man*) *thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall*; ('tis the ſign of an infirm mind) and μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, *not to faulter* or decay, μὴ ἐκλύεσθαι, *not to be diſſolved* or disjointed *in our ſouls* (as the body is in ſcorbutick diſtempers) are rules preſcribed to us in ſuch caſes: We do then indeed need a firm and robuſt conſtitution of ſoul; we ſhould then bear up moſt reſolutely and ſtoutly: the encouragement of *Moſes* to the people, entring into battel may well be accommodated to us, in regard to our conflicts with adverſities; *Let not your hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified becauſe of them.* Prov. 24. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Rev. 2. 3. 2 Theſſ. 3. 13. Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 3. —*nunc animis opus eſt, nunc pectore firmo.* Deut. 20. 3.

6. We ſhould not be weary of our condition, or have irkſome longings for alteration; but with a quiet indifferency, and willingneſs of mind lie under it, during God's pleaſure; according to the *Wiſe-man*'s advice; *My ſon deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apoſtle*, enforced by our *Lord*'s example; *Conſider him, that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* We ſhould not think God ſlow, or his time long and tedious, as if he were forgetful of us, or backward to ſuccour us: as the *Pſalmiſt* was enclined to do, when in the day of trouble he brake forth into theſe conceits and expreſſions; *Will the Lord caſt off for ever, and will he be favourable no more; is his mercy clean gone for ever, doth his promiſe fail for evermore; Hath God forgotten to be gracious; hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* Thus he in a ſad mood was apt to think and ſpeak; but recollecting himſelf he perceived it was his errour, and confeſſed it was his fault thus to imagine, *I ſaid, it was mine infirmity*; and it will be ours likewiſe, if we entertain ſuch conceptions and reſentments: we ſhould with the ſame mind endure our preſent ſtate, as we do paſs through a hard winter, or a time of foul weather, taking it for ſeaſonable and fit, becauſe the wiſe Authour of nature hath ſo appointed and ordered it. Prov 3. 11. Heb. 12. 3. Pſal. 77. 7, 10.

7. We ſhould by adverſe accidents be rendred lowly in our own eyes, and ſober in our conceits of our ſelves; meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of ſpirit; ſenſible of our unworthineſs and meanneſs, of our natural frailty, penury and miſery, of our actual offences and miſcarriages; deeply affected in regard to the awful majeſty and power, to the perfect holineſs, and ſtrict juſtice of God: they ſhould quell our haughty ſtomach, they ſhould ſupple our ſtiff wilfulneſs, they ſhould ſoften our hard hearts, they ſhould mitigate our peeviſh humours; to effect theſe things is uſually the deſign of ſuch accidents, and it is ever the beſt fruit of them; this is that, which St. *Peter* adviſeth to, when he ſaith: *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; which God approveth and encourageth with a gracious promiſe, when he ſaith; —*To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word*: this diſpoſition is an inſeparable adherent to contentedneſs; he 1 Pet. 5. 6. Iſa. 66. 2.

that hath not his ſpirit thus broken or mollified, will hardly be content in any ſtate; he that is haughty in conceit, and ſturdy in humour will every where find that which will croſs and diſturb him.

8. It is required that we ſhould, notwithſtanding any meanneſs, any hardneſs of our condition, be meekly and kindly affected toward others, being ſatisfied and pleaſed with their more proſperous ſtate. We ſhould not be angry with the World, becauſe we do not thrive or flouriſh in it; we ſhould not be ſullen, or peeviſh toward any man, becauſe his fortune is better than ours; we ſhould not repine or grudge at the good ſucceſs of any of our brethren, becauſe we want the like our ſelves, *we ſhould rather rejoice with thoſe that rejoice*; innocently filching ſome pleaſure from them, or borrowing ſome ſatisfaction from their enjoyments. It is *humane* thus to do, becauſe of the natural cognation and friendſhip of men; it is more eſpecially *Chriſtian*, becauſe of our ſpiritual conſanguinity; by vertue whereof we are ſo knit together, and made *members each to other*, that *if* (as St. *Paul* telleth us) *one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members ſhould rejoice with it*: We can hardly be content without thus appropriating the goods, and ſharing in the delights of others; he can never be content, who looketh *with an evil eye* upon other mens proſperity; he cannot do well himſelf, who loveth not to ſee his neighbour do well; numberleſs occaſions will happen to diſcompoſe and vex him.

Ita plerumque contingit, ut dum aliquos fratres noſtros in quantulacunque requie conſtitutos in mediis noſtris anxietatibus cogitamus, non parva ex parte recreemur, tanquam & nos ideo ipſi quietius tranquilliuſque vivamus. Aug. Ep. 144.

Rom. 12. 15.

Rom. 12. 15.
1 Cor. 12. 26.

Adverſity impatiently born is apt to ſour our ſpirits, and render us froward toward men; eſpecially when it proceedeth from the unkindneſs, ingratitude, or treachery of friends, or of perſons obliged to us for our good Will, or for benefits done to them; but nothing ſhould render us unkindly diſpoſed toward the World, nothing ſhould extinguiſh charity in us toward any man; ſo plain reaſon teacheth us, ſo great examples enforce. *Moſes* did not loſe his affection towards his Countreymen, becauſe he was by one of them threatened away into baniſhment and vagrancy; the *Apoſtles* became not diſaffected to the World, becauſe it miſuſed and perſecuted them; our Lord did continue moſt earneſtly to deſire, and laboriouſly to endeavour the good of thoſe who moſt deſpitefully uſed him; Like theirs, in all caſes, ſhould our diſpoſition be; we ſhould ever obſerve the *Pſalmiſt*'s advice; *Ceaſe from anger, forſake wrath, fret not thy ſelf in any wiſe to do evil.* Again.

Pſal. 37. 8.

9. Contentedneſs doth imply a freedom from all ſolicitude and anxiety of mind, in reference to proviſion for our needs, and conveniences of life; according to thoſe rules and precepts of *caſting our burthen and care upon the Lord*, of *being careful for nothing, but commending our affairs to God's ordering*; according to that moſt comfortable Precept of our *Lord*, *Take no care, ſaying what ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or how ſhall we be cloathed; for your heavenly Father knoweth, that ye want all theſe things*: If we do not thus, it is hardly poſſible that we ſhould be content; if we do not depend upon Providence, we cannot ſcape being often diſtracted with care, and perplexed with fear; we cannot chearfully hope for any thing we need, nor be quietly ſecure of any thing we poſſeſs.

1 Pet. 5. 7.
Pſal. 37. 5. 55. 23.
Phil. 4. 6.
Matt. 6. 31.

10. It requireth alſo that we ſhould curb our deſires, and confine them in the narroweſt bounds we can; ſo as not to affect more in quantity, or better in quality, than our nature and ſtate do require: if we muſt have ſuperfluities, if we can onely reliſh dainties, we ſhall never be pleaſed; for as nature hath limits, and is content with little; as there is no ſtate in this

Ἡδέα πολυτελείας ἀπολαύσιν οἱ ὄγκοι τοῦ πλούτου δόμενοι. Epic. *ad* Menœc.
Ventre nihil novi frugalius. Juv. *Sat.* 5.

this World, the exigencies whereof may not be answered with a competence; so curiosity is an infinite, and insatiable thing: *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich*; that is, he which is curious and nice in his desires, will never have enough: The rule, which (according to St. *Paul*) should regulate our desires is this; *Having food and raiment, let us with them be satisfied*; if this will satisfy us, we may easily obtain satisfaction; a moderate industry with God's blessing, will procure so much; God hath promised to bestow it; if this will not suffice, there is no sure way of getting or keeping more; As God is no-wise obliged to provide us superfluities, or concerned to relieve our extravagant longings; so we may fear that Providence will be ready to cross us in our cares and endeavors tending to those purposes; so that we shall be disappointed in the procurement, or disturbed in the fruition of such needless things: However he that is most scant in his desires, is likely to be most content in his mind: *He* (as *Socrates* said) *is neareſt the Gods* (who needs nothing) *that needeth feweſt things.*

Prov. 21. 17.

Αἱ γὰρ φύσει ἀνέξεις αὐταρκείᾳ πλεονεκτοῦσι. Cl. Alex. *Pæd* 2. 1.

1 Tim. 6. 8.

Si ad naturam vives nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Epic. Sen. *Ep.* 16.

Ὁ ἐλαχίστων δεόμενος ἐγγύτατα θεῶν. Socr. *in* Xenoph. *Apomn.* 3.

In fine, contentedness doth import, that whatever our condition is, our minds and affections should be modelled, and squared just according to it; so that our inclinations be compliant, our desires be congruous thereto, so that easily we can comport with the inconveniences, can relish the comforts, can improve the advantages sticking thereto; otherwise like an ill-made Garment, it will sit unhandsome upon us, and be troublesome to us. It is not usually our condition it self, but the unsuitableness thereof to our disposition and desires (which soureth all its sweets, and rendreth its advantages fruitless) that createth discontent; for (although it be very mean) others bear the same chearfully; many would be glad thereof; if therefore we will be content, we must bend our inclinations, and adapt our desires to a correspondence with our state.

If we are rich, we should get a large and bountiful heart, otherwise our Wealth will hang loose about us; the care and trouble in keeping it, the suspicion and fear of losing it, the desire of amplifying it, the unwillingness to spend or use it, will bereave us of all true satisfaction therein, and render it no less unsavoury to us, than unprofitable to others.

If we are poor, we should have a frugal, provident, industrious mind, sparing in desires, free from curiosity, willing to take pains, able to digest hardships, otherwise the straitness of our condition will pinch and gall us.

Are we high in dignity or reputation? we then need a mind well ballasted with sober thoughts, otherwise the Wind of Vanity will drive us into absurd behaviours, thence will dash us upon disappointments, and consequently will plunge us into vexation and discontent.

Are we mean and low? we need a meek and lowly, a calm and steady spirit: not affecting little respects, or resenting the want of them; apt to pass over or to bear quietly petty affronts and neglects; not apt to be moved by Words signifying contempt or disdain; else (being fretted with such things, which in this ill-natur'd and hard-hearted World we may be subject often to meet with) we shall be uneasie in our minds, and impatiently wish a change of our state.

These, and the like dispositions and affections of soul this duty containeth, or requireth: from hence should arise a correspondent external demeanour, and such actions as these which follow:

1. We should restrain our Tongues from all unseemly and unsavoury expressions, implying dissatisfaction in God's proceedings, or displeasure

at his Providence; arguing desperation or distrust in God; such as were
Psal. 78. 19. Numb. 21. 5. those of the discontented and impatient *Israelites*; *They* (saith the *Psalmist*) *spake against God; they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of
Isa. 3. 21. Rev. 19. 9, 11, 21. whom the *Prophet* saith—*When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King and their God*; as those in the *Apocalypse*, who being afflicted with deserved judgments, *did blaspheme the name of God, which had power over those plagues — blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores.* Into such profane enormities of language is discontent apt to break forth, questioning the power of God, or his willingness to succour us; venting wrath and displeasure toward him; charging him foolishly with injustice, or with unkindness, or with negligence, or with impotency; the abstaining from which behaviour, under the sense of his bitter calamities, is a great commendation of *Job*; *In all this* ('tis said) *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly.*

Job 1. 22. Οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀσεβούντι τῷ θεῷ. Ἀλλ' ἔχε σιγῇ μόδον, ὑπίτρεφον ἢ θεῖον. Hom. Od. τ'.

2. We should indeed forbear any the least complaint or murmuring, in regard to the dispensations of Providence; or upon dissatisfaction in the state allotted us: St. *Jude* saith,
Jude 15, 16. that God in the last day *will come, to execute judgment, and to convince men of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*; *these* (subjoyneth he) are γογγυσταὶ, μεμψίμοιροι, *murmurers, that complain of their lot*: which signifieth the heinousness and extreme dangerousness of
Lam. 3. 39. this practice. *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* is the *Prophet's* question, implying it to be an unreasonable and blameable practice Wherefore the advice of *David* is good; to suppress all complaint, to be still and
Psal. 46. 10. 4. 4. 37. 7. silent in such cases: *Be still* (saith he) *and know that I am God*, and *Be silent to the Lord*; the which Precepts his practice may seem well to interpret and back; *I was*, saith he, *dumb, I opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing*: and accordingly *Job*, *Behold* (said he, after having considered all the reasons he could imagine of God's proceedings) *I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* And
Psal. 39. 9. ——σιωπῇ Πάσχειν ἄλγεα πολλὰ βίας ὑποδέγμενον ἀνδρῶν. Od. v.

Job 40. 4.

Isa. 53. 7. thus our *Saviour*, when *he was oppressed and afflicted, opened not his mouth.*

Δόξα τῷ θεῷ πάντων ἕνεκεν. Οὐ γὰρ παύσομαι τοῦτο ὑπολέγων ἀεὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσι μοι τοῖς συμβαίνουσι. Chrys. ad Olymp. Ep. 11.

Yea it is our duty, in these cases, to spend our breath in declaring our satisfaction in God's dealing with us: acknowledging his wisdom, justice and goodness therein; blessing and praising him for all that hath befallen
Psal. 119. 75. us; each of us confessing after *David*; *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*; imitating *Job*, who upon the loss of all his goods did say no more than this; *The Lord*
Job 1. 21. *gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*

4. We should abstain from all irregular, unlawful and unworthy courses toward the removal or remedy of our needs, or crosses, chusing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve, or relax our selves; rather bearing patiently, than violently,
Jer. 5. 5. like those in the *Prophet*, *breaking our yoke, and bursting our bands.* *Take*
Job 36. 21. *heed, regard not iniquity; for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.* We should rather continue poor, than by couzenage, or rapine, endeavour to raise our fortune; we should rather lye under disgrace and contempt, than by sinful or sordid compliances strive to acquire the respect and favour of men; we should rather willingly rest in the lowest condition, than do

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as thoſe, who by diſturbing the World, by fomenting diſorders and factions, by ſupplanting their neighbours Welfare, by venting ſlanders and diſtractions, do labour to amplify their eſtate: We ſhould rather endure any inconvenience or diſtreſs, than have recourſe to ways of evading them, diſallowed by God; doing as the *Jews* did, who in their ſtraits, againſt the declared pleaſure of God, *ſet their faces toward* Ægypt, *ſtrengthened themſelves in the ſtrength of* Pharaoh, *truſted in the ſtaff of that broken reed.* In neglect or diffidence toward God, to embrace ſuch aids, is (as God in the *Prophet* declareth) a very blameable and miſchievous folly: *Ephraim* (ſaith he) *is like a ſilly dove without heart; they call to* Ægypt, *they go to* Aſſyria——*Wo unto them, for they have fled from me; deſtruction unto them, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed againſt me.* VVe may conſider how St. *Paul* reproveth the *Corinthians* for ſeeking a redreſs of wrong ſcandalous and diſhonourable to the Church, *Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather ſuffer your ſelves to be defrauded?* even to right your ſelves in a way, whereby any diſhonour may come to God, or damage to his Church is not to be approved; and better it is in the *Apoſtle*'s judgment, to bear any injury or damage our ſelves, *Better it is* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *if the will of God be ſo, that we ſuffer for well-doing, than to do ill.* And, *Let them, who ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creatour*; is another wholeſom advice of that great *Apoſtle*.

Jer. 42. 15. 2. 18. 13. Iſa. 30. 2. 35. 6. 31. 1. Ezek. 17. 15. Hoſ. 7. 11, 13. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Pet. 3. 17 4. 19.

5. VVe ſhould, notwithſtanding any adverſity, proceed in our affairs (ſuch as God requireth, or reaſon putteth us upon) with alacrity, courage and induſtry; performing however, ſo far as our circumſtances do permit, what is good and fit for us: No diſappointment or croſs, no ſtraits or grievances of condition ſhould render us liſtleſs, or lazy, but rather it ſhould quicken and inflame our activity; this being a good way to divert us from the ſenſe of our misfortunes, and to comfort us under their preſſure; as alſo the readieſt way to remove or to abate them, τὸ παρὸν εὖ θεῖναι, *to order the preſent well*, whatever it be; to make the beſt of a bad matter, to march forward whither reaſon calls (how difficultly ſoever, or ſlowly it be) in a rough or dirty way; not to yeild to difficulties, but reſolutely to encounter them, to ſtruggle luſtily with them, to endeavour with all our might to ſurmount them; are acts worthy of a manly reaſon and courage; to direct ill accidents to good ends, and improve them to honeſt uſes, is the work of a noble vertue. If a bad game be dealt us, we ſhould not preſently throw up, but play it out ſo well as we can; ſo perhaps we may ſave ſomewhat, we ſhall at leaſt be buſie till a better come. *Put thy truſt in the Lord, and be doing good*, is the *Pſalmiſt*'s advice in ſuch a caſe; and it is a practice neceſſary to the procuring and maintaining content: If we be not otherwiſe well employed, we ſhall be apt, in our thoughts, to melancholize, and dote upon our miſchances, the ſenſe of them will faſten upon our ſpirits, and gnaw our hearts.

Κερδαντέον τὸ παρὸν σὺν λογισμῷ Ant. 4. 26. 6. 2.

Τὸ παρὸν ἀπευθύνειν πρὸς ὅσιόν τι καὶ δικαιοσύνην. Id. 12. 1.

Tu ne cede malis, ſed contra audentior ito.

Pſal. 37. 3.

6 VVe ſhould behave our ſelves fairly and kindly toward the inſtruments and abetters of our adverſity; toward thoſe who brought us into it, and thoſe who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, and thoſe who forbear to afford the ſuccour we might expect; forbearing to expreſs any wrath or diſpleaſure, to exerciſe any revenge or enmity toward them; but rather, even upon that ſcore, bearing good will, and expreſſing kindneſs toward them; not onely as to our brethren, whom, according to the general

general Law of Charity, we are bound to love, but as to the ſervants of God in this particular caſe, and the inſtruments of his pleaſure toward us; conſidering, that by maligning or moleſting them, we do expreſs ill reſentments of God's dealing with us, and in effect, through their ſides do wound his Providence; thus did the good *King* behave himſelf toward *Shimei*, when he was bitterly reproached and curſed by him; not ſuffering (upon this accompt, becauſe he was God's inſtrument of afflicting himſelf) that any harm ſhould be done unto him; thus the holy *Apoſtles* *being reviled did bleſs, being defamed did intreat*; thus our Lord demeaned himſelf toward his ſpiteful adverſaries; who, *when he was reviled, did not revile again; when he ſuffered, he did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteouſly.* In all theſe caſes we ſhould at leaſt obſerve the rules and advices of the *wiſe Man*; *Say not, I will do ſo to him as he hath done to me, I will render to the man according to his work*; *Say thou not, I will recompence evil*; *but wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſave thee.*

2 Sam. 16. 7.
1 Cor. 4. 12.
1 Pet. 2. 23. 3. 9.
Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22.

Diſcontent uſually conſiſteth not ſo much in diſpleaſure for the things we ſuffer, as at the perſons who bring them on us, or who do not help to rid us from them; it is their preſumed injury or diſcourteſie which we do fret at; ſuch paſſions therefore toward men being diſcarded, our evils preſently will become ſupportable, and content eaſily will enſue. As men in any ſickneſs or pain, if their friends are about them (affording comfort or aſſiſtance) do not ſeem to feel any thing, and forbear complaining; ſo if the World about us doth pleaſe us, if we bear no diſaffection or grudge toward any perſon in view, our adverſity will appear leſs grievous, it will indeed commonly be ſcarce ſenſible to us.

In theſe and ſuch like acts, the duty and vertue of contentedneſs doth eſpecially reſide; or it is employed and exerciſed by them: And ſo much may ſuffice for the explication of its nature; I come now to conſider the way of attaining it, intimated by St. *Paul* here, when he ſaith, *I have learned.*

SERMON VI.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned &c.

THESE Words ſignify how contentedneſs may be attained, or how it is produced. It is not an endowment innate to us; it doth not arrive by chance into us; it is not to be purchaſed by any price; it ſpringeth not up of its ſelf, nor ariſeth from the quality of any ſtate: but it is a product of diſcipline; *I have learned.*

It

It is a queſtion debated in *Plato*, εἰ διδακτὸν ἡ ἀρετή, *whether Vertue be to be learned*, St. *Paul* plainly reſolveth it in this caſe by his own experience and teſtimony. What *Seneca* ſaith in general of vertue (*Nature giveth not Vertue; it is an art to become good*) is moſt true of this vertue; it is an art, with which we are not born, no more than with any other art or ſcience; the which, as other arts, cannot be acquired without ſtudious application of mind, and induſtrious exerciſe: No art indeed requireth more hard ſtudy and pain toward the acquiry of it, there being ſo many difficulties, ſo many obſtacles in the way thereto: We have no great capacity, no towardly diſpoſition to learn it; We muſt, in doing it, deny our carnal ſenſe, we muſt ſettle our wild fancy, and ſuppreſs fond conceits; we muſt bend our ſtiff and ſtubborn inclinations; we muſt repreſs and reſtrain wanton deſires; we muſt allay and ſtill tumultuous paſſions; we muſt croſs our humour, and curb our temper; which to do is a hard chapter to learn: Much conſideration, much practice, much contention and diligence are required thereto.

Non dat natura virtutem ars eſt bonum fieri. Sen. *Ep.* 89.

Virtus etiamſi quoſdam impetus ex natura ſumit, tamen perficienda doctrina eſt. Quintil. 12. 2.

Hence it is an art which we may obſerve few do much ſtudy; and of the ſtudents therein few are great proficients; ſo that *Qui fit, Mecænas?* *Horace*'s queſtion, *How comes it to paſs, that no body liveth content with the lot aſſigned by God?* wanted not ſufficient ground.

However it is not like the *Quadrature of the circle*, or the *Philoſophers Stone*, an art impoſſible to be learned, and which will baffle all ſtudy: there are examples which ſhew it to be obtainable; there are rules and precepts, by obſerving which we may arrive to it.

And it is certainly a moſt excellent piece of learning; moſt deſerving our earneſt ſtudy: no other ſcience will yeild ſo great ſatisfaction, or good uſe; all other ſciences, in compariſon thereto, are dry and fruitleſs curioſities; for were we Maſters of all other knowledge, yet wanted the skill of being content, we ſhould not be wiſe or happy; happineſs and diſcontent are ἀσύζευκτα (things incompatible.)

But how then may this skill be learned? I anſwer, chiefly (divine grace concurring) by theſe three ways. 1. By underſtanding the rules and precepts, wherein the practice thereof conſiſteth. 2. By diligent exerciſe, or application of thoſe rules to practice; whereby the habit will be produced. 3. By ſeriouſly conſidering, and impreſſing upon our minds thoſe rational inducements (ſuggeſted by the nature and reaſon of things) which are apt to perſwade the practice thereof. The *firſt* way I have already endeavored to declare; the *ſecond* wholly dependeth upon the will and endeavor of the learner; the *third* I ſhall now inſiſt upon, propounding ſome rational conſiderations, apt (by God's help) to perſwade contentedneſs, and ſerving to cure the malady of diſcontent. They may be drawn from ſeveral heads; from God, from our ſelves, from our particular condition or ſtate; from the World or general ſtate of men here; from the particular ſtate of other men in compariſon to ours; from the nature and conſequences of the duty it ſelf: Every thing about us well examined and pondered, will miniſter ſomewhat inducing and aſſiſting thereto.

I. In regard to God we may conſider, that equity doth exact, and gratitude requireth, and all reaſon dictateth, that we ſhould be content; or that in being diſcontented we behave our ſelves very unbeſeemingly and unworthily, are very unjuſt, very ingrateful, and very fooliſh toward him. 1 Sam. 3. 18.

1. Equity doth exact this duty of us, and in performing it we act juſtly toward God, both admitting his due right, and acknowledging his good exerciſe

Matt. 20. 17. exercise thereof; That saying in the *Gospel*, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* is a most evident maxime of equity; it is therefore the natural right, and prerogative of God (as the Creator and Preserver, and consequently the absolute Lord, Owner and Governour of all things) to assign his station, and allot his portion to every person, as he judgeth good and convenient; it is most just that inviolably he should enjoy this right; He being also infinitely wise and good, it is likewise most just to acknowledge that he doth perfectly well manage this right; Now by contentful submission to God's disposal of things, we do worthily express our due regard to both these, avowing his right, and approving his exercise thereof; but by discontent and regret at what happeneth, we do in effect injure God in both those respects, disavowing his right, and impeaching his management. We do thereby so renounce his right, as (so far as conceit and wish do reach) to invade it, and usurp it to our selves: signifying, that in our opinion things ought not to be ordered according to his judgment and pleasure, but after our fancy and humour; we claim to our selves the priviledge of controlling his estate, and dispensing his goods, so as to be our own carvers, and to assume to our selves so much as we think good; we imply, that, if we were able, we would extort the power out of his hands, and manage it our selves, modelling the World according to our conceits and desires.

Multos inveni æquos adversus homines, adversus Deos neminem: Sen. *Ep.* 93.

We do also (since we cannot but perceive the other attempt of dispossessing God to be frivolous and fruitless) in effect charge God with misdemeanour, with iniquity or infirmity in his distribution and disposal of things; intimating, that in our opinion he doth not order them so justly, or so wisely as might be (not so well as we in our Wisdom and Justice should order them) for did we conceive them managed for the best, we could not but judge it most unreasonable to be aggrieved, or to complain: so heinously insolent, and unjust are we in being discontent. In earnest, Which is most equal, that God should have his Will, or we? For shame we shall say, God: Why then do we not contentedly let him have it?

'Tis indeed, if we consider it, the highest piece of injustice that we can be guilty of; exceeding that which we commit in any other sort of disobedience. For as in any State seditious Mutining is the greatest crime, as most directly violating the Majesty, and subverting the authority of the Prince; so in the World, none may be supposed more to offend and wrong its Sovereign Governour, than such malecontents, who dislike and blame his proceedings: Even a *Heathen* could teach us, that it is our duty to *subject our mind to him that administreth all things, as good Citizens to the Law of the Commonwealth*; if we do not, we are rebellious and seditious, which is the highest pitch of injustice toward our most gracious Sovereign.

Τῷ αὐτῷ γνώμῃ ἑπεσθαι τῷ διοικοῦντι τὰ ὅλα καθάπερ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ πολῖται τῷ νόμῳ τῆς πόλεως. Arr. l. 12.

Again, there can be no greater injury, or affront offered to God, than to *give him the lie*, by questioning his veracity or fidelity; this discontent plainly doth involve: for God hath expressly declared himself ready upon all occasions to do us good; he hath promised to *care for us*, and *never to forsake us*, or leave us destitute; which Word of his if we did not distrust, and take him to be unfaithful, we could not be discontent: As no man is displeased with his condition, or suspicious of want, who knoweth that he hath abundant supply of all that he can need in a sure place; that he hath a person most able, most willing, most faithful engaged to succour him; so did we believe God to be true, who hath promised to help us, we could not be discontented for fear of any want.

1 John 5. 10.

Matt. 6. 25, 36.

Heb. 13. 5.

We

We must at least in so doing, suspect God to be deficient in goodness toward us, or unwilling to help us, or we must apprehend him impotent, and unable to perform what he would, and what he hath promised, for us (like those Infidels, who said, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?*) which conceits of God are also very unworthy, and injurious to him. Psal. 78. 19.

2. Gratitude requireth of us this duty: for we having no right, or title to any thing; all that we have coming from God's pure bounty; he having upon us all (whatever our condition comparatively is, or may seem to us) freely conferred many great benefits, common to all men among us (our being, life, reason, capacity of eternal happiness, manifold spiritual blessings, incomparably precious and excellent) we in all reason should be thankful for these, without craving more, or complaining for the want of other things. Whereas also all events (how cross soever to our sensual conceits, or appetites) are by God designed, and dispensed for our good, gratitude requireth, that we should thank God for them, and not murmur against them.

Iniquus est qui muneris sui arbitrium danti non relinquit, avidus qui non lucri loco habet quod accipit, sed damni quod reddidit, &c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 29.

Surely if instead of rendring God thanks for all the excellent gifts which he most liberally (without any previous obligation to us, or desert of ours) hath bestowed on us, and continueth to bestow, we fret, and quarrel, that he doth not in smaller matters seem to cocker us, we are extreamly ingrateful, and disingenuous toward him: If any great Person here should freely bestow on us gifts of huge value (high preferment, or much Wealth) but with good reason, as we might presume, should withhold from us some trifle, that we fancy or dote upon, should we not be very unworthy, if we should take it ill and be angry with him for that cause? The case is plainly the same; God hath in the frankest manner bestowed on us innumerable and inestimable goods, in comparison whereto any comfort or convenience of our state here is very trivial and despicable; Are we not therefore very ingrateful, if we heinously resent the want of any such things; if upon any such accompt we disgust his Providence? Do we not deal, beyond all expression unworthily with God, in so much undervaluing the goods which he hath given us, or doth offer us, and hath put in our reach? He hath made us capable of the greatest goods imaginable, and faithfully upon easie terms proffereth them to us; he even tendereth himself (himself, the immense and all-comprehending good, the fountain of all joy and bliss) to be fully enjoyed by us; his Wisdom he offereth to instruct and guide us, his power to protect and guard us, his fulness to supply us, his goodness to comfort us; he offereth his love and favour to us, in having which we virtually, and in effect have all things; becoming thereby, in the highest degree, rich and honourable and happy; And is it not then outragious unworthiness to prize any other thing (any petty accommodation of this transitory life, any pitiful toy here) so much, as to be displeased for the want thereof; as if all this were not enough to satisfie our needs, or satiate our desires; as if notwithstanding all these immense effusions (yea as it were profusions) of bounty upon us, we could be indigent or unhappy? *Shall we* (to use that holy and most ingenuous consideration of *Job*) *receive so much good from the bountiful hand of God, and shall we not contentedly receive, or bear so small evils from him?* Evils indeed in name, and to gross sense, but not so in reality, not so in effect, at least not so in God's design; but rather things very convenient and profitable for us; which is another aggravation of our ingratitude; for Job 2. 10.

Εὐχαριστῶ σοι πάτερ ὦ ποιητὰ τῶν σῶν ἀριδράπων—ὅτι ἀκοντας ἡμᾶς δι πειῶς, &c. said *Philagrius* in a grievous disease. *Naz.* Ep. 66.

Ἐπειδὰν τὸ μὴ πάσχειν οὐκ ἔχω τοῦτο μὲ τὸ πάσχειν παρακαλύνω τὸ φέρειν, καὶ τὸ διδασκεῖν. Naz. de se. Ep. 63.

Are we not also very ingrateful in misapprehending, and disliking that, which God doeth out of very gracious intentions toward us; in loathing his fatherly and friendly dispensations; the fatherly chastisements and friendly disciplines, which he unwillingly is forced (is I say forced by his own great love, and by our pressing needs) to inflict or impose upon us? Surely our ill opinion of or *despising* (as the *wise-Man* calleth it) these unpleasant blessings is no small fault; Neither will our not discerning (out of affected dulness, and stupid pravity not discerning) the wisdom of God's methods, and the wholesomeness of the means he useth to better us, excuse us from foul ingratitude.

Prov. 3. 11.

Εὐχεται θεὸς τὰς θεὰς ἁπλῶς τἀγαθὰ δίδοναι ὡς τὰς θεὰς καλλίστα εἰδότας ὁποῖα ἀγαθά ἐστι. Xenoph. de Socr.

Charior est illis homo quam sibi.

3. Again, upon many accompts, reason farther dictateth in respect to God, that we should be content: because it is most reasonable to acquiesce in God's choice of our state, he being infinitely more wise than we, and infinitely better understanding what is good for us than we can do: because he is well affected to us, and loveth us more than we do our selves; because he hath a just right, and irresistible power to dispose of us, the which (whatever we can do, however we resent it) he will effectually make use of, whence it is extremely foolish to be discontent: foolish it is to be dissatisfied with the results of his Wisdom, adhering to our vain apprehensions, foolish to distrust his goodness in compliance with our fond self-love; foolish to contest his unquestionable right and uncontroulable power, having nothing but meer impotency to oppose against them; no less than downright madness it is to fret and fume at that which we can no wise help, to bark at that which lodgeth in heaven so far high above us, to solicite deaf necessity with our ineffectual Wailings; for if we think, that our displeasure will affect God, that our complaints will incline him to alter our condition, or comply with our wishes, we do conceit vainly, and without any ground; sooner may we, by our imagination, stop the Tides of the Sea, or turn the Streams of Rivers backward; sooner, by our cries, may we stay the Sun, and change all the courses of the Stars, than by our passionate resentments or moanful clamours we can check the current of affairs, or alter that state of things, which is by God's high decree established: discontented behaviour will rather fasten our condition, or remove it into a worse place; as it highly doth offend God, and encreaseth our guilt, so it moveth God to continue, and to augment our evils. Thus lifting up our eyes to heaven, and considering the reference our disposition and demeanour hath to God, will induce us to bear our case contentedly.

Οὐ γὰρ πω πρήξεις πέλεται κρυερῆϊ γόοιο. *Il.* ω

Σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀναγκὴ καὶ θεοῖσι μὴ μάχου. Eurip.

Lam. 3. 39.

II. Again, Reflecting upon our selves, we may observe much reason to be content with our state; in whatever capacity we look upon our selves, it in reason becometh us, we in duty are obliged to be so.

As men and creatures we naturally are indigent and impotent; we have no just claim to any thing, nor any possession maintainable by our power; all that we have, or can have, cometh from most pure courtesie and bounty; wherefore how little soever is allowed us, we have no wrong done us, nor can we justly complain thereat: Such beggars as we are must not pretend to be chusers; if any thing be given us we may be glad, we should be thankful. It is for those who have a right and a power to maintain it, to resent and expostulate, if their due be withheld; but for us that never had any thing, which we could call our own; that have no power to get or keep any thing; for us that came into the World naked and defenceless, that live here in continual, absolute and arbitrary dependance for all our livelihood and subsistence, to contest with him that maintaineth us, or to complain of his dealing, is ridiculously absurd and vain.

Upon

Upon a moral accompt we have leſs reaſon to challenge ought, or to complain of any thing; for we deſerve nothing but evil: If we rightly eſteem and value our ſelves, any thing will ſeem good enough for us, any condition will appear better than we deſerve: duly examining the imperfections and infirmities of our nature, the diſorder and depravedneſs of our hearts, the demeanours and enormities of our lives, we cannot but apprehend, that we are even unworthy of the *crumbs which fall from our maſters table*; we cannot but acknowledge with the good *Patriarch*, that we are *leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*. Conſidering our natural unworthineſs, we ſhall ſee that we deſerve not ſo much as thoſe common benefits which all men enjoy, and without which we cannot ſubſiſt; ſo that in regard to them we ſhall be ready to acknowledge with the *Pſalmiſt*, *Lord what is man that thou takeſt knowledge of him, or the Son of man, that thou makeſt accompt of him*? Trying our hearts and examining our ways, we ſhall ſoon diſcover it to be abundant mercy, that we are not utterly deprived of all good things, ſtript of all comforts, yea diſpoſſeſſed of our very being and life it ſelf; that we are obliged to acknowledge with thoſe in the *Lamentations*, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not*. Were we far better than we are, yet it would not become us to conteſt with him, to whoſe diſpoſal and judgment we are ſubject; as *Job* teacheth us: *Behold* (ſaith he) *God taketh away, who can hinder him, who will ſay unto him, what doeſt thou? If he will not withdraw his anger, the proud * helpers do ſtoop under him; how much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to reaſon with him; whom though I were righteous, I would not anſwer, but I would make ſupplication to my judge*; but for us, men ſo unrighteous and guilty, to debate with, to queſtion the proceedings of our Judge, it is much more unſeemly.

Matt 15. 17. Gen. 32. 10. Pſal. 44. 3. Job 7. 27. Lam. 3. 22. Job 9. 12. &c. * Κύπτ (Job 9. 32.)

Nothing can be more abſurd, than for men ſo deeply indebted, than for ſinners ſo very obnoxious to Wrath, to be aggrieved in any ſtate: Shall we, who are conſcious to our ſelves of ſo many great ſins againſt our God; who by wilful tranſgreſſions, or ſlothful neglects, have ſo much affronted and offended him; who have ſo little requited his love, and ſo much abuſed his patience; who have born ſo little fruit, and rendred him ſo little ſervice, ſhall we be angry that our humour is not pleaſed in all things? Shall we effect to ſwim in plenty, to wallow in pleaſure, to bask our ſelves in eaſe; to be fed with dainties, to be gaily clothed, to flourih in a brave and ſplendid condition, to be worſhipped and honoured, who deſerve not the meaneſt competence, or lowelt reſpect, to whom it is a great favour that we are permitted to ſubſiſt, whom ſtrict juſtice would often have caſt into utter miſery and diſconſolateneſs? It is not ſurely for ſuch perſons to be diſſatisfied with any thing in this World, but to bleſs God's exceeding mercy, that they abide there on this ſide of the bottomleſs pit; 'tis their part, with moſt ſubmiſſive patience, to bear whatever is inflicted on them, humbly ſaying with him in the *Prophet*, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him*. Seeing, whatever our croſſes or ſufferings be, we cannot but confeſs to God with thoſe in *Ezra*, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve*; being gainers upon the matter, having ſo much of our debt remitted in effect, being in compariſon to what was due to us very tolerably, yea very favourably dealt with, Why ſhould we be diſſatisfied? If in ſuch caſes men ſhould deal ſo favourably with us, we ſhould be much pleaſed, and ready to thank them; Why then ſhould we take it ill of God, when he even in his hardeſt proceedings againſt us, expreſſeth ſo much indulgence and mercy?

Mic. 7. 9. Ezr. 9. 13.

If we muſt be diſpleaſed, and luſt to complain, we have reaſon much rather to accuſe our ſelves, than to exclaim at Providence, to bewail our ſins, than to deplore our fortune: for our evils are not indeed ſo much the voluntary Works of God, who *doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men*, as the natural products of our ſin, which we do wilfully commit: It is (as the *Prophet* ſpeaketh) *our ſins* that *withhold good things from us*; and bring evil things upon us: *Fools, becauſe of their tranſgreſſion, and becauſe of their iniquities, are afflicted.* We make adverſity neceſſary, or expedient for us, then we cry out upon it: We labour in Planting, but cannot brook *the fruit of our doings*; we, like prodigals, fling away our eſtate in wanton profuſions, then complain of want; we affect and chuſe the cauſes, but loath, and cannot abide the certain conſequences; ſo fond in our conceits, ſo perverſe are we in our affections: *Wherefore doth the living man complain, for the puniſhment of his ſins?* ſo well might the *Prophet* demand and expoſtulate.

Lam 2. 33. Αὐθαίρετα πήματα. Jer. 5. 25. Pſal. 107. 17. Jer. 17. 10. 21 14. 32. 19. 6. 19. Lam. 3. 39. גבר

We may farther, looking on our ſelves, conſider our ſelves as ſervants to God, or rather as ſlaves, abſolutely ſubject to his diſpoſal; And ſhall any ſervant, ſhall a mere ſlave preſume to chuſe his place, or determine his rank in the family? Shall he appoint to himſelf what office he will diſcharge, what garb he ſhall go in, what diet he muſt have, what he will do, and how he ſhall be accommodated? Is it not fit that all theſe things ſhould be left to our Maſter's diſcretion and pleaſure? it is moſt reaſonable that we ſhould throughly acquieſce in his determination: even a *Pagan* Philoſopher could teach us, that this is reaſonable; who thus piouſly directeth his Speech to God: *For the reſt uſe me to what thou pleaſeſt. I do conſent unto thee, and am indifferent. I refuſe nothing which ſeemeth good to thee; lead me whither thou wilt; put on me what garment thou pleaſeſt: Wilt thou have me to be a governour or a private man, to ſtay at home or to be baniſhed away, to be poor or to be rich? I will, in reſpect to all theſe things, apologize for thee with men*; thus did *Epictetus* ſay, and ſuch ſpeech well becometh our relation to God: Servants ſhould be content with their Maſters appointments and allowances; they ſhould not onely themſelves forbear to find fault with, but be ready to maintain his proceedings againſt any, who ſhall preſume to reprehend or blame them. Eſpecially ſuch ſervants as we are, who, *after we have done all things commanded us, muſt acknowledge that we are unprofitable ſervants*; ſuch as can bring no conſiderable benefit to our Lord, or any-wiſe advance his ſtate; ſuch as therefore cannot challenge any Wages from him, more than he out of mere favour is pleaſed to allow: Could we, by our labours, enrich God, or raiſe him in dignity, or procure delight to him, it might ſeem congruous that he ſhould anſwerably reward us; but as he getteth nothing by us, ſo we cannot require any thing from him: our beſt ſervices do indeed rather need pardon, than deſerve any reward: No man hath lived ſo well, that he can pretend any thing from God, that he is not indeed much behindhand in his accompts with God, having received from God far more of benefit than he can return to him in ſervice: No man, without extream preſumption and arrogance, can offer to preſcribe, in what meaſure, or what manner God ſhould reward him.

Χρῶ μοι λοιπὸν εἰς ὃ ἂν θέλῃς. Ὁμογνωμονῶ σοι, ἴσος εἰμί. Οὐδὲν παραιτοῦμαι τῶν σοὶ δοκούντων. Ὅπου θέλεις ἄγε· ἵνα δὲ θέλεις ἐσθῆτα περίθες. Ἄρχειν με θέλεις, ἰδιοτεύειν μένειν φεύγειν, πένεσθαι, πλουτεῖν; ἐγώ σοι ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων τούτων πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀπολογήσομαι. Arr. 2. 16.

Luc. 17. 10.

Again, if we conſider our ſelves as the children of God, either by birth or nature, or by adoption and grace, How can we be diſcontent for any thing? Have we not thence great reaſon to hope, or rather to be confident, that we ſhall never want any good thing (neceſſary or conve-

nient

nient for us) that no great evil ſhall ever oppreſs us? For is not God hence by paternal diſpoſition inclined, is he not in a manner, by paternal duty, engaged, in all needful occaſions, to ſupply and ſuccour us? Can we (without great profaneneſs, and no leſs folly) ſurmiſe, that he, which is ſo immenſly good, will be a bad (an unkind, or a neglectful) Father to us? No, as there is no other Father in goodneſs comparable to him, ſo none, in real effects of benignity, can come near him; ſo our Lord aſſureth us: *If ye* (ſaith he) *being evil, know how to give good things to your children; How much more will your heavenly Father give good things to his children that ask him?* Matt. 7. 11.

If we conſider our ſelves as Chriſtians, we have ſtill more reaſon to practiſe this duty: As ſuch, we are not onely poſſeſſed of goods abundantly ſufficient to ſatisfie our deſires; we have hopes able to raiſe our minds above the ſenſe of all preſent things; we have entertainments that ever may divert our minds, and fill our hearts with comfort; but we have alſo an aſſurance of competent ſupplies of temporal goods; for, *Godlineſs is profitable to all things, having the promiſe both of the preſent life, and of that which is to come*: and, *If we ſeek firſt the Kingdom of heaven, and its righteouſneſs, all theſe things ſhall be added unto us.* It is indeed ſtrangely unhandſome for a Chriſtian ever to droop, or to be diſconſolate; for a friend of God, and an heir of heaven to think he wants any thing, or fear that he ſhall ever want; for him, whoſe treaſure and heart are above, to be ſo concerned with any thing here, as deeply to reſent it. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Matt. 6. 33.

Again, if we reflect upon our ſelves as rational men, How for ſhame can we be diſcontent? Do we not therein much diſparage that excellent perfection of our nature? Is it not the proper work of reaſon to prevent things hurtful or offenſive to us, when that may be done; to remove them, if they are removeable; if neither of theſe can be compaſſed, to allay and mitigate them; ſo that we may be able well to ſupport them? Is it not its principal uſe to drive away thoſe fond conceits, and to quell thoſe troubleſome paſſions, which create, or foment diſquiet, and diſpleaſure to us? If it cannot do this, What doth it ſignifie? To what purpoſe have we it? Is not our condition really worſe than that of brute beaſts, if reaſon ſerveth only to diſcry the cauſes of trouble, but cannot enable to bear it? All the reaſons we have produced, and all that we ſhall produce againſt diſcontent, will, if we are reaſonable men, and reaſon availeth any thing, have this effect upon us.

Wherefore conſidering our ſelves, our capacities, our relations, our ſtations, it is moſt reaſonable to be content with our condition, and with whatever doth befal us.

SERM.

SERMON VII.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever ſtate, &c.

III. FArther, if we conſider, our condition (be it what it will, how poor, how mean, how deſpicable and forlorn ſoever) we can have from it no reaſonable ground of diſcontent.

1. Our condition in this World cannot (if rightly eſtimated, and well managed) be extremely bad, or ſorrowful; nothing here can occur inſupportable, or very grievous in it ſelf; we cannot, if we pleaſe, want any thing conſiderable, and the defect whereof may not be ſupplied, or ſupported by far better enjoyments. If we have high opinions of ſome things, as very excellent, or very needful for us, it's no wonder if we do want them, that our condition is unpleaſant to us; if we take other things for huge evils, then, if they be incumbent on us, we can hardly ſcape being diſpleaſed; but if we thoroughly look through ſuch things, and ſcan them exactly, valuing them, not according to fallacious impreſſions of ſenſe, or illuſive dreamings of fancy, but according to ſound dictates of reaſon, we may find, that neither abſence of the former, nor the preſence of the latter doth make our condition much worſe, or render our caſe deplorable.

We are, for inſtance, poor: that condition rightly weighed, is not ſo very ſad: for what is poverty? what but the abſence of a few ſuperfluous things, which pleaſe wanton fancy rather than anſwer need; without which nature is eaſily ſatisfied, and which if we do not affect, we cannot want? what is it but to wear coarſe clothes, to feed on plain and ſimple fare, to work and take ſome pains, to ſit or go in a lower place, to have no heaps of caſh, or hoards of grain, to keep no retinue, to have few friends, and not one flatterer? and what great harm in this? It is a ſtate, which hath its no ſmall conveniences and comforts, its happy fruits and conſequences; which freeth us from many cares and diſtractions, from many troubles and croſſes, from many encumbrances, many dangers, many temptations, many ſore diſtempers of body and ſoul, many grievous miſchiefs, to which Wealth is expoſed; which maintaineth health, induſtry and ſobriety; diſpoſeth us to feed heartily, to move nimbly, to ſleep ſweetly; which preſerveth us from luxury, from ſatiety; from ſloth and unwieldineſs. It yeildeth diſpoſition of mind, freedom and leiſure to attend the ſtudy of truth, the acquiſt of vertue. It is a ſtate, which many

Tert. *de Pat.* 7.

Τὰ δ' ἀργυρώματ' ὄζιν ἥτε πορφυρὰ
Εἰς τὰς τραγῳδὰς χρήσιμ' ἢ εἰς τὸν βίον. Socrat.

Vid. Plut. *in* Ariſt.

Si vis vacare animo, aut pauper ſis oportet, aut pauperi ſimilis.

Multis ad Philoſophandum obſtitere divitiæ; paupertas expedita eſt, ſecura eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 17.

Sæpius pauper, & fidelius ridet. Sen. *Ep.* 80.

many have born with great chearfulneſs; many (very wiſe men) have voluntarily embraced; which is allotted by divine Wiſdom to moſt men; and which the beſt men often do endure; to which God hath declared an eſpecial regard, which the mouth of truth hath proclaimed happy; which the Son of God hath dignified by his choice, and ſanctified by his partaking deeply thereof; and can ſuch a condition be very loathſome; can it reaſonably diſpleaſe us? Pſal. 10. 14. 35. 10. 68. 10. 69. 33. 72. 4. 13. 140. 12. 146. 7. 147. 2. Luk. 6. 20. Jam. 2. 5. Iſa. 66. 2.

Again, thou art ſuppoſe fallen into diſgrace, or from honour and credit art depreſſed into a ſtate of contempt and infamy? this alſo rightly prized is no ſuch wretchedneſs; for what doth this import? what, but a change of opinion in giddy men, which thou doſt not feel, which thou art not concerned in, if thou pleaſeſt; which thou never hadſt reaſon much to regard, or at all to rely upon? what is thy loſs therein? it is the breaking of a bubble, the ſinking of a Wave, the changing of a Wind, the cracking of a thing moſt brittle, the ſlipping away of a thing moſt fugacious and ſlippery; What is honour and fame, but thought, and what more flitting, what ſooner gone away than a thought? and why art thou diſpleaſed at the loſs of a thing ſo very ſlender and ſlimme? If thou didſt know its nature, thou canſt not be diſappointed; if thou didſt not, it was worth thy while to be thus informed by experience, that thou maieſt not any more regard it. Is the contempt, thou haſt incurred, from thy fault? bear the conſequence thereof patiently, and do thy beſt by removing the cauſe to reverſe the effect: is it undeſerved and cauſeleſs? be ſatisfied in thy innocence, and be glad that thou art above the folly and injuſtice of thoſe, who contemn thee. Let thy affections rather be employed in pity of theirs, than in diſpleaſure for thy own caſe. Did (let me ask thee again) the good opinion of men pleaſe thee? that pleaſure was fond and vain, and it is well thou art rid of it? did it not much affect thee, why then doſt thou much grieve at the loſs thereof? Is not alſo thy fortune in this kind the ſame with that of the beſt men? have not thoſe who have deſerved moſt honour, been expoſed to moſt contempt? *But now* (*Job* could ſay) *they that are younger than I have me in deriſion,* —*they abhor me, they flee far from me, and ſpare not to ſpit in my face.* And, *I am,* (could that great and good *King* ſay) *a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people; All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head,* —and, we are *defamed, we are reviled, we are made as the filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day,* could the holy *Apoſtles* ſay; and *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men,* —*he was deſpiſed and we eſteemed him not,* was ſaid of our Lord himſelf; and can this condition then in juſt eſteem be ſo very pitiful or grievous? Job 30. 1, 10. Pſal. 22. 6, 7. 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. Iſa. 53. 3.

But thou art perhaps troubled becauſe thou art wrongfully cenſured, odiouſly traduced and defamed, abuſed by ſlander, or by detraction; which aſperſeth thee with things whereof thou art no-wiſe guilty, or repreſenteth thee in a character unworthy of thee: Be it ſo; what then; why doth this ſo much affect thee?

Exempl. Jeremiæ. Chryſoſt. *ad* Olymp. 16.

Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus ſum quem mundus oderit. Hier. *Ep.* 39. (*ad* Aſellam.)

Is not every man ſubject to theſe things? are not the greateſt men, are not the wiſeſt men, are not the beſt men liable to the ſame? yea chiefly liable, excellency being the ſpecial mark of envy and obloquy? can any good men eſcape free of them among ſo many bad men, whoſe doings as goodneſs doth reproach, ſo it provoketh their malignity? Canſt thou imagine to paſs thy days in ſo unjuſt and ſpiteful a World without incurring ſuch bad uſage; can ſo many vain, ſo many bold, ſo many lawleſs, tongues

Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἀδικοῦσιν, ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ ἀδικοῦμαι. Theod. *Ep.* 80.

tongues be tied up, or kept within compaſs of truth, or equity? Wilt thou ſuffer it to be in the power of any man at his pleaſure ſo eaſily to diſcompoſe and vex thee? becauſe he will be bad, ſhalt thou be miſerable? why doſt thou not rather pleaſe thy ſelf in the conſcience of thy endeavouring to deſerve and do well; in thy innocence, and clearneſs from the blame which they impoſe on thee; in thy having given no cauſe of ſuch offence and outrage? why doſt thou not rather pity their unworthineſs and unhappineſs, who ſtoop to ſo mean and baſe practices, than fret at them, as bad to thee? they do themſelves far more miſchief, than they can do thee.

And why doſt thou not conſider, that indeed thou art guilty of many faults, and full of real imperfections, ſo that no man can eaſily derogate from thee more than thou deſerveſt: he may indeed tax thee unjuſtly, he may miſs in the particulars of his charge, he may diſcover groundleſs contempt, and ill-will toward thee; but thou knoweſt thy ſelf to be a grievous ſinner, and it is juſt that thou ſhouldſt be reproached, (God, for thy humiliation, or thy correction, may have ordered him, as *David* ſaid he might have ordered *Shimei, to curſe* thee) thou haſt therefore more need to be humble in reflection on thy ſelf, than to ſwell with diſdain in regard to his injury.

Thou ſhouldſt improve this dealing, and make it wholeſome to thee, by taking occaſion thence to correct thy real faults, and endeavouring to become truly more worthy; that ſo thy conſcience may be a firm bulwark againſt all detraction and obloquy: In fine, ſatisfie thy ſelf by *committing thy ſoul with patience in well-doing* unto thy Judge, who aſſuredly will do thee right, will protect thy reputation, and clear thy innocence: his judgment is onely worth regarding, be little concerned with any other.

Theodor. *Ep.* 83.

Again, Being diſappointed and croſſed in the ſucceſs of their projects, or undertakings, is wont to put men, as they conceive, into a woful caſe: but why ſo? why (let me ask thee, who art diſcontented upon this ſcore) didſt thou build much expectation upon uncertainties? didſt thou not foreſee a poſſibility, that thy deſign might miſcarry, and if ſo, why art thou not prepared to receive vvhat happeneth? vvas it not an adventure, vvhy then art thou troubled with thy chance? Is he not a ſilly gameſter, that will fret and fume at a bad caſt, or at the loſs of a game? didſt thou refer the buſineſs to God's diſpoſal and arbitrement? if not, thou deſervedſt to be croſſed, and rather confeſs thy fault, than complain of thy fortune; if thou didſt ſo, then be conſiſtent with thy ſelf, and acquieſce in his determination: In fine, what is thy loſs, is't of thy care and pain? would it have been much better, that thou hadſt been careleſs or idle? but haſt thou not in lieu of them got ſome Wiſdom and Experience? haſt thou not (if thy attempt was reaſonable and worthy) exerciſed thy Wit, thy courage, thy induſtry? haſt thou not (by thy defeat) got an opportunity to expreſs equanimity and patience? if thou ſo improveſt thy diſappointment, thou art a gainer by thy loſs, thou *doſt more than conquer* by thy defeat: however ſince the gain, the credit, the preferment thou didſt aim at, and haſt miſſed, are things in themſelves of no great value, and ſuch as thou maieſt well live without, as other good men have done, thou canſt not have much reaſon to be diſpleaſed upon this accompt, or to reckon thy condition diſaſtrous.

But friends, will ſome ſay, have been unkind, have been ungrateful, have been fickle and falſe, have neglected, have deſerted, have betrayed me; *It was not an enemy, that reproached me, then I could have born it*, &c. this is indeed commonly moſt grievous; yet being ſcanned will not render

Pſal. 55. 7.

a man's

man's condition so lamentable: for, such misbehaviour of friends is more their calamity than ours: the loss of bad friends is no damage, but an advantage; 'tis but the loss of a mischief, and a trouble: the fewer we come to have of such, the more time we save, the less trouble we meet with, the greater security we enjoy. The kindness we have shewed, the obligations we have put on such, are not quite lost, they will bring the rewards due to humanity and fidelity; it will yeild satisfaction to us, that however we have been kind and faithful to them. The fidelity of remaining true friends may satisfie us; however if all other friendship should fail, there is one remains, worth millions of other friends, who can never prove unfaithful, or inconstant, who never will be unmindful of us, or deficient in kindness toward us.

Jam sibi pœnas dedit qui peccavit. Sen. *de Gr.* 2. 30.

The death of friends doth it may be oppress thee with sorrow. Not canst thou lose thy best friend; canst thou lose the presence, the conversation, the protection, the advice, the succour of God? is he not immortal, is he not immutable, is he not inseparable from thee? canst thou be destitute of friends, whilst he stands by thee? Is it not an affront, an heinous indignity to him, to behave thy self, as if thy happiness, thy welfare, thy comfort had dependance on any other but him? is it not a great fault to be unwilling to part with any thing, when he calleth for it?

Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

Οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν ὁ πάντα δεῖσθαι ἐκείνῳ ἀνὴρ καὶ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου φωνὴν, ἀλλὰ καθεύδει ὕπνον τὸν συνήθους μακρότερον. Theod. *Ep.* 68.

Ἀποδημίαν τοίνυν παρεκάλεσα μακρὰν τὴν τελευτήν. *&c.* Theod. *Ep.* 16.

Vid. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 202.

Neither is it a loss of thy friend, but a separation for a small time; he is onely parted from thee as taking a little journey, or going for a small time to repose; within a while we shall be sure to meet again, and joyfully to congratulate, if we are fit, in a better place, and more happy state; *præmisimus, non amisimus*; we have sent him thither before, not quite lost him from us.

Cur doles si periisse non credis? cur impatienter feras subductum interim quem credis reversurum? profectio est quam putas mortem. Tert. *de Pat.* 9. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

Thy friend, if he be a good man (and in such friendships onely we can have true satisfaction) is himself in no bad condition, and doth not want thee; thou canst not therefore reasonably grieve for him; and to grieve onely for thy self is perverse selfishness and fondness.

Impatientia in ejusmodi & spei nostræ male ominatur, & fidem prævaricatur, &c. Tert. *ibid.*

Πῶς τὸ δ' ἀγάπης ἀγαθὸν, ἑαυτῷ τὰ ῥᾴω διδόντα τῷ πλησίον ὑπονέμειν τὰ μεγαλύτερα; Naz. *Or.* 19.

But thou hast lost a great comfort of thy life, and advantage to thy affairs here? is it truly so? is it indeed an irreparable loss, even secluding the consideration of God, whose friendship repaireth all possible loss? what is it, I pray, that was pleasant, convenient, or useful to thee in thy friend, which may not in good measure be supplied here? was it a stile of hearty good-will, was it a sweet freedom of conversation, was it sound advice or kind assistance in thy affairs? and mayst thou not find those left, which are alike able, and willing to minister those benefits? may not the same means, which knit him to thee, conciliate others also to be thy friends? he did not alone surely possess all the good nature, all the fidelity, all the Wisdom in the World, nor hath carried them all away with him? other friends therefore thou mayst find to supply his room: all good men will be ready, if thou art good, to be thy friends, they will heartily love thee; they will be ready to chear thee with their sweet and wholesome society, to yield thee their best counsel and help upon any occasion: Is it not therefore a fond and unaccountable affection to a kind of personality, rather than want of a real convenience that disturbeth thee?

Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

In fine, the same reasons, which in any other loss may comfort us, should do it also in this: neither a friend nor any other good thing we

can enjoy is under any ſecurity of not ſoon loſing it; our welfare is not annexed to one man no more than to any other inferiour thing; this is the condition of all good things here to be tranſient and ſeparable from us; and accordingly we ſhould be affected toward them.

Fragile fractum eſt, mortale mortuum eſt.

But farther, it perhaps diſpleaſeth us, that the courſe of the World doeth not go right, or according to our mind; that Juſtice is not well diſpenſed, that vertue is under hatches, that worth is not conſidered, that Induſtry is not rewarded, that innocence and modeſty are trampled upon; that favour, partiality, corruption, flattery, craft, impudence do carry all before them; devouring all the encouragement due to honeſt induſtry: This may be obſerved, but why ſhould it diſpleaſe? art thou guilty of contributing to this? then mend, if not, then bear; eſpecially ſeeing thou canſt not help it; for ſo it hath always been, and ever will be in the World, that things never have gone there as the wiſeſt judge, or the beſt men deſire: there have never been good men enough to ſway the World, nor will the few good men that are, be ſo active in promoting publick good, as bad are in driving on their private deſigns; doth not this courſe of things neceſſarily ſpring from the nature of men, which therefore we ſhould no more be vexed at, than for that a Serpent hath poiſon, or that a Waſp hath a ſting? we cannot wonder at it, why then ſhould we be ſtrangely affected by it? could any man ever have been pleaſed, if this were a ſufficient cauſe of diſpleaſure? However the World goes, we may yet make a tolerable ſhift, God is engaged competently to provide for us; that ſhould ſatisfie us: God obſerveth theſe things no leſs than we, and he can eaſily hinder them, yet he thinketh good to ſuffer them; and ſhall not we do ſo likewiſe? there is in fine appointed a judgment hereafter, when all theſe things ſhall be redreſſed and ſet ſtreight; when juſtice and vertue ſhall triumph, when integrity and induſtry ſhall find their due recompence, 'tis but a moment to that time, and till then we may reſt ſatisfied.

Thus if we do ſurvey and rightly ſtate things, which cauſe diſcontent, and ſeem to render our condition hard and ſad, we ſhall find, that not from the things, but from our ſelves all the miſchief proceeds: We by our imagination give to the lighteſt things a Weight, and ſwell the ſmalleſt things into a vaſt bulk; we fancy them very frightful and doleful, then we tremble and grieve at them. Mere names (the names of poverty, of diſgrace, of defeat) do ſcare us, without conſulting reaſon, and conſidering how little terrible the things are themſelves. We follow ſilly prejudices, judging that highly good, which the vulgar admire, that very evil, which the weakeſt ſort of men are wont to complain of; hence ſo commonly doth our caſe ſeem grievous. But in truth there is no condition ſo bad, but if we manage it well and wiſely, if we bend our mind to comply with it, if we moderate our paſſions about the accidents thereof, if we vigilantly embrace and enjoy the advantages thereof, may not be eaſily ſupportable, yea prove very comfortable to us; it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverſe behaviours, which do create the trouble, which ſeemeth adherent to any condition, and embittereth every ſtate; which from any ſlight occaſion doth create vexation, and turneth every event into diſaſter.

2. As there is no condition here perfectly and purely good (not deficient in ſome conveniences, not blended with ſome troubles) ſo there is none ſo throughly bad, that it hath not ſomewhat convenient and comfortable therein; ſeldom

—uſque adeo nulla eſt, ſincera voluptas,
Solicitique aliquid lætis intervenit——
Ovid

c

or never all good things do forsake a man at once, or all mischiefs together assail him; somewhat usually abideth, which well improved, or wisely enjoyed, may satisfie a man, yea, render his estate comparable to theirs, who to vulgar eyes appear to be in the best condition: there is in every condition somewhat of good compensating for its evils, and reducing it to a balance with other more plausible states. We are, suppose again, in poverty, (that instance I propound usually, as the most ordinary ground of discontent) but have we therewith good health? then most rich men may envy us, and reasonably we should not exchange our state with many crazy Princes: have we therewith our liberty? that is an inestimable good which often-times the greatest men have wanted, and would have purchased with heaps of gold: have we therein a quiet mind, and a free use of our time? It is that, which wisest men have prized above any Wealth, and which the chief men of the World would be glad to taste of: have we a clear reputation? we have then the best good that any Wealth can yeild, we have more than many can obtain in the most splendid fortune: have we any friends sticking to us? that is more than the richest persons can assure themselves of, to whom it is near impossible to distinguish the friends of their persons from the flatterers of their fortune; it is a privilege and solace, which Princes are hardly capable to arrive at: have we a bare competency, sufficient to maintain our life? we thereby keep our appetites in better compass, and our faculties in greater vigour; we thence better relish all things; we in consequence thereof avoid the burthens, the diseases, the vices of sloth and luxury: have we farther (as if we are not very bad, we shall in this case assuredly have, humanity disposing all men thereto) the compassion of men; is not this somewhat better, than that envy, that ill-will, that obloquy, which usually do attend Wealth and Prosperity? why then, if our poor estate hath so manifold conveniencies, do we so much distast it? why do we so dwell and pore on the small inconveniencies we feel under it, over-looking or slighting the benefits we may enjoy thereby? This indeed ordinarily is our folly and infirmity; that the want of any little thing, which we fancy or affect, doth hinder us, from satisfaction in all other things; *One dead fly* causeth all our *ointment to stink*; the possession of a Kingdom will not keep us from being *heavy and displeased* (as *Ahab* was) if we cannot acquire a small vineyard near us; on that one thing our head runs continually, our heart is wholly set, we can think on, we can taste nothing else; the want of that notwithstanding all our affluence doth pinch us, our dainties thence doth prove insipid, our splendours appear dim, every thing but that is a toy unto us: So capriciously, and unaccomptably prone are we to discontent.

Assuescendum conditioni suæ; & quam minimum de illa querendum, & quicquid habet circa se commodi apprehendendum est: nihil tam acerbum est, ex quo non æquus animus solatium inveniat. Sen. *de Tranq. an. cap.* 10.

Prov. 27. 7.

Eccles. 10. 1.

1 Kings 21. 1.

3. Is our condition (let me ask again) so extreamly bad, that it cannot be much worse? Are we sunk to the bottom of all calamity? No surely; God's Providence will not suffer, the state of things here can never admit that to be: here are succours always ready against extremities; our own Wit and Industry, the help of relations or friends, the natural pity and charity of our neighbours will preserve us from them; especially persons in any measure innocent can never come near them; there will therefore never fail some good matter of content in what remains; a few good things, well improved, may greatly solace us; but however, let us imagine our case to be the worst that can be; that a confluence of all temporal mischiefs and wants hath arrived, that we are utterly bereaved of all the comforts this World afforded; that we are stripped of all our

Wealth, quite ſunk in our reputation, deſerted of every friend, deprived of our health and our liberty; that all the loſſes, all the diſgraces, all the pains which poor *Job* ſuſtained, or far more and greater than thoſe, have together ſeiſed on us; yet we cannot have ſufficient reaſon to be diſcontent; for that nevertheleſs we have goods left to us in our hands, or within our reach, far ſurpaſſing all thoſe goods we have loſt, much outweighing the evils we do undergo: When the World hath done its worſt, we remain Maſters of things incomparably better than it, and all it containeth; the poſſeſſion whereof may, and (if we be wiſe) will abundantly ſatisfie us. We are men ſtill, and have our reaſon left behind, which alone, in worth, exceedeth all the treaſures of the World; in well uſing which, and thereby ordering all things for the beſt, we become more worthy, and more happy than the moſt fortunate fool on earth; we may therein find more true ſatisfaction, than any Wealth, or any Glory here can miniſter: We may have a good Conſcience left, (the ſenſe of having lived well heretofore, or at leaſt a ſerious reſolution to live well hereafter) and that is a *continual feaſt*, yielding a far more ſolid and ſavoury pleaſure, than the moſt ample revenue can afford: We may have hope in God (the authour and donour of all good things) and thereby far greater aſſurance of our convenient ſubſiſtence and welfare, than all preſent poſſeſſions can beſtow; we have reſerved a free acceſs to the Throne of Grace, and thereby a ſure means (grounded on God's infallible word and promiſe) of obtaining whatever is good for us; we have a firm right to innumerable ſpiritual bleſſings and priviledges, each of them juſtly valuable beyond whole Worlds of pelf; we can, in a word (we can if we pleaſe) enjoy God's favour, which immenſly tranſcendeth all other enjoyments, which vaſtly more than countervaileth the abſence of all other things; of this, by applying our ſelves to the love and ſervice of God, we are infallibly capable; of this no worldly force or fortune can diſpoil us; we having this, our condition cannot be poor, contemptible or pitiful; 'tis indeed thereby moſt rich, glorious and happy: For how can he be poor that hath the Lord of all things always ready to ſupply him; who hath God (as the *Pſalmiſt* is wont to ſpeak) to be *his portion for ever*? How can he be deſpicable, that hath the honour to have the Sovereign Majeſty of the World for his eſpecial friend? How can he be miſerable who enjoyeth the fountain of all happineſs, who hath *the light of God's countenance* to cheer him, who hath the conſolations of God's holy Spirit to refreſh and revive him? What can he want, who, beſide his preſent intereſt in all the needful effects of God's bountiful love, is an Heir of Heaven and everlaſting bliſs? Seeing therefore it is in our power to be religious, ſeeing we may, if we will (God's Grace concurring, which preventeth us to ſeek, which never is withheld from thoſe who ſeek it) be good Chriſtians; ſeeing nothing can hinder us from fearing God, or can *ſeparate us from his love*, neither can any thing render our condition bad or unhappy, really diſtreſſed or needy: *O fear the Lord* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *for there is no want to them that ſeek him*: *The young Lions* (or the rich, as the LXX. render it) *do lack and ſuffer hunger*; *but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing*; and, *Whoſo keepeth the commandment, ſhall feel no evil thing*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*; and, *The hand of our God is upon all them that ſeek him*, ſaith the *Prophet*; and, *Who is he that ſhall harm you*; (or do ill to you, or make you worſe) *if ye be followers of that which is good*? ſaith St. *Peter*; and, *We know* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *that to them who love God all things cooperate for good*; and, *Godlineſs* (ſaith he again) *with contentedneſs is great gain*; that is, ſuppoſing we have the goods which piety miniſtreth,

Job, who ἐνίνωσεν αὐτῷ (τῷ διαβόλῳ) βελοδήκλῳ ἅπασαν κατατοξεύομενον ἐν αὐτῷ, &c. Chryſ. *ad* Olymp. 2.

Prov. 15. 15.

Pſal. 73. 26. 16. 5. 119. 57. 142. 5.

Rom. 8. 39.

Pſal. 34. 9.

Πλέσιοι ἐπτώχευσαν. LXX.

Eccleſ. 8. 5.

Ezra 8. 22.

1 Pet. 3. 13.

Ὁ κακώσων.

Rom. 8. 28.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

ſtreth, although we have nothing more, we are, if we can be content, very well to paſs; it is abundantly ſufficient for us.

Why then, I pray, are we diſcontent? What do we groan or grieve for? what is it that we do want? is it the uſe of reaſon, is it vertue, is it God's favour? then indeed we have good cauſe to be diſpleaſed; for the want of thoſe things is indeed lamentable; but if we do want them, it is onely our ſelves that we ſhould complain of; for we may have them if we will, and who can help it if we will not? Who, if we ſhall wilfully deprive our ſelves of them, will be concerned to mind our complaints? But is it onely a lump of traſh, or a puff of honour, or a flaſh of pleaſure, that we do need? Is it that we cannot ſo delicately glut our bellies, or ſo finely cloath our backs, or ſo throughly ſooth our fancies, as we could wiſh, that we ſo pitifully moan? Is it being reſtrained in ſome reſpects from the ſwinge of our humour, is it that we are not ſo much regarded, or are ſlighted by ſome perſons, is it that we are croſſed in ſome deſign, that ſo diſcompoſeth and diſcourageth us? then are we ſottiſhly fond and childiſh in our conceits, and our affections: for proper it is to children, when as they want no ſolid or ſubſtantial goods, to wail for worthleſs toies and trinkets; 'tis for children, when they have not their will in petty and impertinent matters, to cry and lament; children are much affected with every Word, or little ſhew that croſſeth them: If we were (as St. *Paul* chargeth us to be) *perfect men*, if we had manly judgments, and manly affections toward things, we ſhould not ſo regard or value any of theſe temporal and tranſitory things, either good or evil, as by the want of one ſort, or by the preſence of the other, to be much diſturbed; we ſhould, with St. *Paul*, ſtyle any preſent evil ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως, *a lightneſs of affliction*: We ſhould with him reckon, *that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glories which ſhall be revealed to us*: We ſhould with St. *Peter greatly rejoyce, though for a ſeaſon we are in heavineſs, through manifold trials*, or afflictions: We ſhould eſteem any condition here very tolerable, yea very good. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 8. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 6.

4. In truth (if we will not mince the matter, and can bear a truth ſounding like a Paradox) uſually our condition is then better, when it ſeemeth worſe; then we have moſt cauſe to be glad when we are apteſt to grieve; then we ſhould be thankful, when we do complain; that it appeareth otherwiſe to us, it is becauſe in our taxations of things we do ordinarily judge (or rather not judge, but fancy, not hearing or regarding any dictate of reaſon) like beaſts; prizing things merely according to preſent ſenſe, or ſhew, not examining their intrinſick natures, or looking forward into their proper fruits and conſequences.

Adverſity (or a ſtate, wherein we are not furniſhed with all accommodations grateful to ſenſe or fancy; or wherein ſomewhat doth cleave to us offenſive to thoſe inferiour powers of ſoul) is the thing which we chiefly loath and abominate; whereas, in true judgment, nothing commonly is more neceſſary, more wholſome, more uſeful and beneficial to us; nothing is more needful, or conducible to the health of our ſoul, and to our real happineſs, than it: It is the School of Wiſdom, wherein our minds are diſciplined and improved in the knowledge of the beſt things, whence it is termed παιδεία, that is, inſtructive chaſtiſement; * ſo *David* found it, *It is*, ſaid he, *good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes*; and, our *Lord* himſelf, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε, *He learned obedience from what he ſuffered*. It is the *Academy* wherein vertue is acquired and exerciſed;

——*multoque in rebus acerbis*
Acrius advertunt animos ad religionem. Lucret. 3. p. 64.

Καὶ γὰρ ἡ πύρωσις πᾶσι, καὶ τὸ ῥᾳδυμίαν ἐκκόπτειν πᾶσαν ἡ θλῖψις, καὶ πρὸς ἅπασιν ὠφέλιμος καὶ κατυπεῖσι τὴν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων τὴν ἀτιμίαν, καὶ πολλῷ εἰσάγει τὸ φιλοσοφίαν, &c. Chry. *in* 2 Cor. *Orat.* 26.

* Pſal. 119. 71. 1 Cor. 11. 32. Κειμόμθοι ὑπὸ κυρίου παιδευόμεθα. Heb. 5. 8.

Miraris tu, si Deus, ille bonorum amantissimus qui illos quam optimos esse atque excellentissimos vult, fortunam illis cum qua exerceantur assignat? Sen. *de Prov.* 2.

Deut. 8. 2.

Eccles. 7. 3. Prov. 20. 30. Heb. 12. 11. Jam. 1. 3. Rom. 5. 3.

exercised; so God meant it to his people; *The Lord thy God* (saith *Moses*) *led thee this forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and prove thee.* So the *Wiseman* saith, that *by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better*; and, *that stripes do cleanse the inward parts of the belly.* And, *It yieldeth* (saith the *Apostle*) *the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.*

Job 23. 10. (Psal. 66. 10.) Eccles. 2. 5. Sap. 3. 5. (Isa. 1. 25. 48. 10. Mal. 3. 23. Dan. 11. 35.)

* Hence πειρασμὸς (trial) is the usual word signifying it. 1 Pet. 1. 6, &c.

It is the furnace of the Soul wherein it is tryed, cleansed and refined from the dross of vain conceits, of perverse humours, of vitious distempers: *When* (saith *Job*) *he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*: and, *Gold* (saith the *Wise-man*) *is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of* * *adversity.*

Isa. 26. 16. 29. 19. Hos. 5. 15. Psal. 78. 34. 107. 4. &c. 84. 16. 2 Chron. 2. 3, 12. Dan. 3. 34. Psal. 119. 67.

It is the method whereby God reclaimeth sturdy sinners to goodness, engageth them to seek and serve himself; so of the *Israelites*, the Prophet saith, *Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them*; so *Manasses, when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers*; so *Nebuchadnezzar*, after being driven from his Kingdom, *his understanding returned unto him, and he blessed the most high, and praised and honoured him that liveth for ever.* So *David* himself, *Before*, said he, *I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.*

Ἡ γὰρ θλῖψ πόνων ἐπίπασις μιδῶν ἐπίπασις ὅτι καὶ ἔρεισμα ἀσφαλὲς πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐκόντας ἐκπεσεῖν καὶ γὰρ τύφον καταστέλλει καὶ ῥαθυμίαν ἀποστρέφει καὶ φρονιμωτέρους ποιεῖ καὶ φιλοσοφωτέρους ἐργάζεται, &c. Chrys. *tom.* 6. *Or.* 9.

* 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Heb. 10. 36. ὑπομονῆς ἔχετε χρείαν, &c.

1 Pet. 1. 6. 4. 14.

It is that whereby God doth prepare men, and doth entitle them to the blessed rewards hereafter: *Our light affliction* (saith * St. *Paul*) *which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; and, *Ye* (saith St. *Peter*) *greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heavinesse through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Such is the nature, such the use, such the fruits of adversity.

Nihil infelicius eo, cui nihil unquam evenit adversi, non licuit enim illi se experiri. Sen. *de Provid.* 3.

Non fert ullum ictum illæsa felicitas. Ibid.

It is indeed scarce possible, that without tasting it somewhat deeply, any man should become in good measure either wise or good. He must be very ignorant of himself (of his own temper and inclinations, of the strength and forces of his reason) who hath not met with some rubs and crosses to try himself and them with: the greater part of things he must little understand, who hath not experienced the worst part: he cannot skill to weild and govern his passions, who never had them stirred up, and tossed about by cross accidents: he can be no good Pilot in matters of humane life, who hath not for some time sailed in a rough Sea, in foul Weather, among sands and shelves: he could have no good opportunity of employing throughly, or improving his Wit, his courage, his industry, who hath had no straits to extricate himself from, no difficulties to surmount, no hardships to sustain: The vertues of humility, of patience, of contentedness necessarily must be unknown to him, to whom no disgraces, no wants, no sore pains have arrived, by well enduring which, those vertues are learnt, and planted in the Soul: Scarce can he become very charitable, or compassionate to others, who never himself hath felt the smart of affliction, or inconveniences of any distress;

Quæ latet, inque bonis cessat non cognita rebus,
Apparet virtus, arguiturque malis.
Ovid. *Trist.* 4. 3.

Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco. Æn. 2.

for

for even, as the *Apoſtle* teacheth us, our Saviour himſelf was obliged *to ſuffer tribulation*, that he thence might become *merciful*, and *diſpoſed to ſuccour the afflicted.* (No wonder, if he *that liveth in* continual *proſperity*, be a *Nabal*, churliſh and diſcourteous, inſenſible of other mens grievances:) And how can he expreſs much piety or love to God, who is not (in ſubmiſſion to God's Will, and for his ſake) put to ſuffer any thing grievous, or want any thing deſirable? When can he employ any great faith or hope in God, who never hath any viſible need of ſuccour, or relief from him, who hath other preſent aids to confide in? Hovv can he purely delight in God, and place his ſole felicity in him? Hovv can he throughly reliſh ſpiritual things, vvhoſe affections are taken up by an affluence of other goods, whoſe appetites are glutted with enjoyment of other delights? What but deprivation of theſe things can lay open the vanity, the deceitfulneſs and ſlipperineſs of them? What but croſſes and diſappointments here can withdraw our minds from a fond admiration, and eager affection towards this World? What but the want of theſe joys and ſatisfactions, can drive us to ſeek our felicity otherwhere? when *the deceit of riches* poſſeſſeth us, How can we judge right of things? when cares about them diſtract us, How can we think about any thing that is good? when their ſhares entangle us, and their clogs encumber us, How can we be free and expedite in doing good? when abundance fatneth our hearts, and eaſe ſoftneth our ſpirits, and ſucceſs puffeth up our minds; when pride, ſenſuality, ſtupidity and ſloth (the moſt inſeparable adherents to large and proſperous Eſtates) do continually inſinuate themſelves into us, What Wiſdom, what Vertue are we like to have?

Matt. 13. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9. Luc. 10. 41. Deut. 32. 15. Prov. 1. 32. 30. 9. Hoſ. 13. 6. Pſal. 30. 6. Jer. 22. 21. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Seeing then adverſity is ſo wholeſom and uſeful, the remedy of ſo great miſchiefs, the cauſe of ſo great benefit to us, Why ſhould we be diſpleaſed therewith? to be diſpleaſed with it, is to be diſpleaſed with that which is moſt needful, or moſt convenient for us, to be diſpleaſed with the health and welfare of our Souls; that we are reſcued from errours and vices, with all their black trains of miſeries and wickedneſs; to be diſpleaſed that we are not detained under the reign of folly and miſchief, that we are not inevitably made fools and beaſts. To be diſguſted with providence for affliction or poverty, is no other than as if we ſhould be angry with our Phyſician for adminiſtring a purge, or for preſcribing abſtinence to us; as if we ſhould fret at our Chirurgeon for ſearching our Wounds, or applying needful corroſives; as if we ſhould complain of the hand which draweth us from a precipice, or *pulleth us out of the fire. Many benefits* (ſaith *Seneca*) *have a ſad and rough countenance, as to burn and cut in order to healing* Such a benefit of God is adverſity to us; and as ſuch with a gladſome and thankful mind ſhould we receive it.

Jude 23.

Beneficia multa triſtem & aſperam frontem habent, quemadmodum urere, & ſecare, ut ſanes. Sen. *de Benef.* 5. 20.

If with a diligent obſervation we conſult experience, we ſhall find, that as many have great cauſe to bewail, that they have been rich, that they have been blinded and corrupted with proſperity, that they have *received their conſolation here*; ſo many have great reaſon to be glad, that they have been poor, that they have been

Horrorem operis fructus excuſat. Tert. *Scorp.* 5.

Luke 6. 24. Jam. 5. 1. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Let our condition be what it will, we are the ſame. It doth not change us in our intrinſick worth, or ſtate. It is but a garment about us, or as weather.

Cum moleſtiæ in hujus vitæ fragilitate crebreſcunt, æternam requiem nos deſiderare compellunt. Mundus quippe iſte periculoſior eſt blandus, quam moleſtus, & magis cavendus quum ſe illicit diligi, quam cum admonet, cogitque contemni. Aug. *Ep.* 144.

Arduæ nam res eſt opibus non tradere mores. Mart.

Munera iſta fortunæ putatis? inſidiæ ſunt. Sen. *Ep.* 8.

Viſcata beneficia. Ib.

Gratulari & gaudere nos decet dignatione divinæ caſtigationis— O ſervum illum beatum, cujus emendationi Dominus inſtat; cui dignatur iraſci, quem admonendi diſſimulatione non decipit. Tert. *de Pat.* 11.

Ὁ ἁμαρτάνων κἂν μὴ κολάζηται, πάντων ἔστιν ἀθλιώτερος, &c. Chryſ. ὠνδε.

Ἡ νοσούντων ἰατρεῖα, ἢ ὑγιαινόντων γυμνάσια. Simpl.

Κρειττῶν δὲ πμεῖα ἀχαλινώτου βίου φιλόσοφος. Naz. *Ep.* 66.

dif-

——Ego utrum
Nave ferar magna an parva, ferar unus & idem. Hor. *Epiſt.* 2. 3.

diſappointed, that they have taſted the bitter cup; it having inſtructed and corrected them; it having rendred them ſober and conſiderate; induſtrious and frugal, mindful of God, and devout toward him: And what we may rejoice in, when paſt, Why ſhould we not bear contentedly when preſent? Why ſhould not the expectation of ſuch good fruits ſatisfie us?

Why ſhould not ſuch a condition, being ſo plainly better in it ſelf, ſeem alſo better unto us? We cannot, if we are reaſonable, but approve it in our judgment; Why then are we not fully reconciled unto it in our affection?

SERMON VIII.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever ſtate, &c.

5. BUT farther; Let our ſtate be, as to quality, what it will, good or bad, joyful or unpleaſant, we may yet conſider, that it cannot be deſperate, it may not be laſting; for there is not any neceſſary connexion between the preſent and the future; wherefore, as the preſent being momentany and tranſient, can little trouble us, ſo the future being unknown, and uncertain, ſhould not diſmay us. As no man reaſonably can be elevated with confidence in a good ſtate, preſuming on its duration, (*Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth*;) ſo no man ſhould be dejected for a bad one, in ſuſpicion that it will abide long; ſeeing neither (conſidering the frequent viciſſitudes that occur, and the flux nature of all things here) is each of them in it ſelf, ſtable; and the continuance of each abſolutely dependeth on God's arbitrary diſpoſal; and as God often doth overturn proſperity, to humane judgment moſt firmly grounded, ſo he moſt eaſily can redreſs the appearance to moſt forelorn adverſity; and he, being eſpecially *the helper of the helpleſs*, doth frequently perform it: As *he poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty*; ſo *he raiſeth the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil: He caſteth down the mighty from their ſeat, and exalteth the humble and meek: He ſendeth the rich empty away, and filleth the hungry with good things. He maketh ſore, and bindeth up, he woundeth, and his hands make whole.*

Prov. 27. 1.

Multa intervenient quibus vicinum periculum vel prope admotum aut ſubſiſtat aut deſinat, aut in alienum caput tranſeat. Sen.

Pſal. 72. 12. 107. 9. 10. 4. 106. 9.
Job 12. 21. Pſal. 107. 40.
Iſa. 25. 5. Job 5. 11.
Iſa. 2. 11. Pſal. 18. 27.

Pſal. 113. 7. 107. 41.

Job 5. 18.
1 Sam. 2. 7.

Τοῖς γοῦν ἔχουσι καὶ σώφρονι λογισμῷ κεχρημένοις οὐδὲν ἦν ἀνθρωπίνων ἀδόκητον, οὐδὲν δὲ τούτων σφαλερὸν ἢ βέβαιον, &c. Theod. *Ep.* 14.

Conſidering therefore the reaſon of things, and the nature of God, if our ſtate be at preſent bad or ſorrowful, we have more reaſon to hope for its amendment, than to fear its continuance. If indeed things went on

on in a fatal track, meerly according to a blind and beedleſs chance, or a ſtiff and unalterable neceſſity; if there were no remedy from God's providence, or ſupport by his grace to be expected (although even then there would be no reaſon to grieve or complain; grief would be unreaſonable becauſe unprofitable, complaint would be vain, becauſe fortune and fate are deaf) yet our infirmity might ſomewhat excuſe that idle proceeding; but ſince *not a Sparrow falleth to the ground, not a hair of our head periſheth*; nothing at all paſſeth otherwiſe, than by the voluntary diſpoſition of a moſt wiſe and gracious God; ſince he doth always ſtrictly view, and is very ſenſible of our griefs; yea, doth in a manner ſympathize with them (according to thoſe pathetical expreſſions in the Prophets; *His bowels ſound, and are troubled, his heart is turned within him*; *In all their afflictions he was afflicted.*) Since he farther hath by promiſe obliged himſelf to *care for us*, to ſupport, and ſuccour us; we have all reaſon to hope, yea firmly to believe (if at leaſt we can find in our hearts to hope and to believe) that we ſhall, as ſoon as it is good and expedient for us, find relief and eaſe; we ſhall have that Καιρὸν βοήθειαν, that *ſeaſonable ſuccour*, of which the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* ſpeaketh.

Sperat adverſis, metuit ſecundis; Alteram ſortem bene præparatum pectus. Hor. *Carm.* 2. 10.

Mat. 10. 29, 30. Luke 21. 18.

Hoſ. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Iſa. 63. 9, 15. Luc. 12. 29, 31. Heb. 13. 5. Matt. 6. 33. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Pſal. 55. 23. 37. 5. Heb. 4. 6.

Hope lieth at the bottom of the worſt condition that can be; *The poor* (ſaith *Job*'s friend) *hath hope*; and the rich can have no more; the future being equally cloſe to both; the one can have no greater aſſurance to keep what he hath, than the other hath to get what he needeth; yea clearly the poor hath the advantage in the caſe; for God hath more declared, that he will relieve the poor man's want, than that he will preſerve the rich man's ſtore: If then we have in every condition a hope preſent to us, Why do we *grieve as thoſe who have no hope*? having ever ready the beſt anchor that can be to reſt upon (for in this rolling Sea of humane affairs, there is no firmer anchor than hope) Why do we let our minds be toſſed with diſcontentful ſolicitudes and fears? Why do we not rather (as the *Apoſtle* injoineth) *rejoice in hope*, than grieve out of deſpair? Why do we not as the *Prophet* adviſeth, *hope and wait quietly for the ſalvation of the Lord*? the effect of ſo repoſing our ſelves for the future: on God's Providence would be perfect content, and peace, according to that of the *Prophet*, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed in thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee*: And that of the *wiſe Man*, *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy ſhall ſpring up unto him.*

Job 5. 16. 1 Theſſ. 4. 13. Heb. 6. 19. Rom. 12. 12. Lam. 3. 26. Iſa. 26. 3. Eccl. 1. 23.

The truth is, and it ſeemeth very obſervable, in order to our purpoſe, that moſt diſcontent ariſeth not from the ſenſe of incumbent evil, but from ſuſpicion, or fear of ſomewhat to come: Although God at preſent diſpenſeth a competency of food and rayment, although we are in a tolerable condition, and feel no extremity of want or pain, yet not deſcrying the way of a future proviſion for us, anſwerable to our deſires, we do trouble our ſelves; which demeanour implyeth great ignorance and infidelity; We think God obliged in kindneſs, not only to beſtow upon us what is needful in its ſeaſon, but to furniſh us with ſtores, and allow us ſecurities; we muſt have ſomewhat in hand, or we cannot truſt him for the future; this is that which our Saviour cautioneth againſt, as the root of diſcontent and ſign of diffidence; *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow ſhall take thought for the things of it ſelf, ſufficient to the day is the evil thereof*: An advice no leſs pious, than manifeſtly full of Reaſon and Wiſdom: For what a palpable folly is it to anticipate that evil which

Πολλῆς μανίας ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ τῆς ὕστερον συμβησομένων ἢ μηδ' ὅλως συμβησομένων τῷ ἀδυμίας ἤδη χαράττειν καὶ κόπτειν. Chryſ. *ad Stagir.* 2.

Matt. 6. 34.

Calamitoſus eſt animus futuri anxius, & ante miſeriam miſer.

Ne sis miser ante tempus; cum illa quæ imminentia expavisti, fortasse nunquam ventura sint, certe nondum venerint, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 13.

Quod juvat dolori suo occurrere? satis cito dolebis cum venerit. Ibid.

Quoties incerta erunt maria, tibi save. Ib.

we would avoid; then, when we earnestly desire to put off sorrow, to pull it toward us; to feel that mischief which possibly shall never be; to give it a being in our fancy, which it may never have in nature? Could we follow this advice, never resenting evils before they come, never prejudging about future events against God's Providence, and our own quiet; constantly depending on the divine care for us; not taking false alarms, and trembling at things, which shall never come near us; not being disturbed with panick fears, no discontent could ever seize upon us; for the present is ever supportable; our mind cannot be overwhelmed by the pangs of a transitory moment.

Lam. 3. 25. Isa. 30. 18. 40. 31. 49. 23. Psal. 25. 3. 37. 9. 9. 10. 2 Chron. 28. 9. Ezra 8. 22. Amos 5. 4. 2 Chron. 15. 2. Eccl. 2. 10.

If we need farther encouragement for application of this remedy, we have manifold experiments to assure its vertue: as there are innumerable Promises, that none who hope in God shall be disappointed, so there are many illustrious examples of those, whom God hath in remarkable manner, and wonderful measure relieved from wants and distresses, raising them out of deepest poverty, contempt and worldly wretchedness, into most eminent degrees of Wealth and Prosperity: *Look* (saith the *Hebrew* Sage) *into the ancient generations, and see; Who hath trusted in the Lord, and hath been ashamed? Or who hath abiden in his fear, and hath been forsaken? Or who hath invoked him, and he did over-look?* (*or despise him?*) If we look into those generations, we may there find *Joseph* out of slavery, and out of prison, advanced to be the chief Governour of a most flourishing Kingdom; *Moses* from an exile, and a vagrant, made the Redeemer and Commander of a populous Nation: *Job* out of extream poverty and disgrace, restored to be in Wealth and honour *twice* greater than *the greatest men of the East*: *Daniel* out of captivity and persecution, become President of the greatest Monarchy on earth: *David* raised out of great meanness to highest dignity, restored out of extream straits into a most prosperous state; according to those Words of admiration and acknowledgment; *O what great troubles and adversities hast thou shewed me, and yet didst thou turn and refresh me, yea and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again: Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side*: Thus hath God eminently done with divers, thus we may be assured that he will do competently with us, if with the like faith and patience, we do, as they did, rely and wait upon him.

Job 42. 10. 1. 3. Psal. 71. 18. 69. 29. 18. 36.

6. But farther, imagine or suppose, that our condition (so irksome to us at present) will certainly hold on to the utmost; yet consider also, that it soon will cease, and change of it self; since we are mortal, our evils cannot be perpetual, we cannot long be infested with them.

As it may debase, and embitter all the prosperity in the World, to consider, that it is very fading and short-lived, that its splendour is but a blaze, its pleasure but a flash, its joy but as the *crackling of thorns*; so it should abate and sweeten any adversity, to remember, that it is passing away, and suddenly will be gone. Put, I say, the worst case that can be, that it were certainly determined, and we did as certainly know it, that those things which cause our displeasure, should continue through our whole life; yet since our life it self will soon be spun out, and with it all our worldly evils will vanish, Why are we troubled? What is said of our selves must in consequence be truly applied to them; *They flee like a shadow, and continue not*; they are *winds passing and coming not again*; they are *vapours appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away*; they *wither like grass, and fade away as a leaf*; they may dye before us, they cannot outlive

Eccl. 7. 6. (Psal. 27. 13.) *I had fainted, if I had not believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*

1 Chron. 29. 15. Psal. 78. 39. Jam. 4. 14. Psal. 90. 5. Isa. 64. 6. 40. 6.

live us; our life is but a *hand breadth*; And can then our evils have any vast bulk? *Our age is as nothing*; And can any crosses therein be then any great matter? How can any thing so very short be very intolerable? It is but ὀλίγον ἄρτι λυπηθέντες, being (as St. *Peter* speaketh) *a little while yet aggrieved*; it is but μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, *a small quantity whatever it be of time*, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith, that *we need patience*, it is but τὸ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως, *an affliction for a present moment*; and therefore as St. *Paul* intimateth, *light* and inconsiderable that we are to undergo. We have but a very narrow strait of time to pass over, but we shall land on the firm, and vast continent of eternity; when we shall be freed from all the troublesome agitations, from all the perilous storms, from all the nauseous qualms of this navigation; death (which may be very near, which cannot be far off) is a sure haven from all the tempests of life, a safe refuge from all the persecutions of the World, an infallible medicine of all the diseases of our mind, and of our state: it will inlarge us from all restraints, it will discharge all our debts, it will ease us from all our toils, it will stifle all our cares, it will vail all our disgraces: it will still all our complaints, and bury all our disquiets; it will wipe all tears from our eyes, and banish all sorrow from our hearts: it perfectly will level all conditions, setting the high and low, the rich and poor, the wise and ignorant all together upon even ground; smothering all the pomp and glories, swallowing all the Wealth and Treasures of the World.

Pſal. 39. 5. *Omnia brevia tolerabilia eſſe debent, etiamſi magna.* Cic. Iæl.
1 Pet. 1. 6. Heb. 10. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Ἴσος χῶρος ἅπασι, πένησι τε καὶ βασιλεῦσι.
Πάντες ἴσοι νέκυες. Phocyl.

It is therefore but holding out a while, and all our molestation, of its own accord, will expire: time certainly will cure us; but it is better that we should owe that benefit to reason, and let it presently comfort us: It is better by rational consideration, to work content in our selves, using the brevity and frailty of our life as an argument to sustain us in our adversity, than onely to find the end thereof as a natural and necessary means of evasion from it.

Κρεῖσσον——
Ὁ μέλλεις τῷ χρόνῳ χαλίζεσθαι, τοῦτο χαλίζεσθαι τῷ λόγῳ. Plut. *ad* Apoll.

Serious reflection upon our mortality, is indeed, upon many accompts a powerful antidote against discontent; being apt to extirpate the most radical causes thereof.

Is it because we much admire these worldly things, that we so much grieve for the want of them? this will quell that admiration; For how can we admire them if we consider, how in regard to us they are so very transitory, and evanid? How can we deem them much worth the having, when we can for so little time enjoy them, must so very soon quite part from them?

How can we dote on the World, seeing *The World* (as St. *John* saith) *passeth away, and the desire thereof?*
1 Joh. 2. 27.

How can we value any Worldly glory, since *All the glory of men is* (as St. *Peter* telleth us) *as the flower of the grass*; since, (as the *Psalmist* saith) *Man in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish?*
1 Cor. 7. 31. Eccl. 1. 3, &c. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Pſal. 49. 12. 82. 6.

How can we *set our heart* on riches considering that *Riches are not for ever*, nor *can* (as the *wise Man* saith) *deliver from death*; that as St. *James* admonisheth, *The rich man fadeth in his ways*; that it may be said to any rich man, as it was to him in the *Gospel*; *Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee, and what thou hast prepared to whom shall it fall?*
Prov. 27. 24. 11. 4. Jam. 1. 11. Heb. 11. 25.

How can we fansie pleasure, seeing it is but πρόσκαιρος ἀπόλαυσις, a very *temporary fruition*; seeing however we do *eat*, or *drink*, or *play*, it followeth, the *morrow we shall dye.*
1 Cor. 15. 32.

How can we even admire any secular Wisdom, and Knowledge, see-

Pſal. 46. 4. ing that it is (as the *Pſalmiſt* telleth us) true of every man, that—*his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts periſh*; particularly it is ſeen that *wiſe Men dye*, no otherwiſe then as *the* Pſal. 49. 10. Eccleſ. 9. 10. 2. 14. *fooliſh, and brutiſh perſon periſheth*; that, as *Solomon* with regret obſerved, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither we are going.*

Do we admire the condition of thoſe, who, upon the ſtage, do appear in the ſtate of Kings, do act the part of wealthy men, do talk gravely and wiſely like Judges or Philoſophers for an hour or two? If we do not admire thoſe ſhadows and mockeries of ſtate, Why do we admire any appearances upon this Theatre of the World, which are ſcarce a whit leſs deceitful, or more durable than they?

Is it an envious or diſdainful regret at the advantages of others before us (of others perhaps that are unworthy and unfit, or that are, as we conceit, no more worthy and capable than our ſelves) that gnaweth our heart; is it, that ſuch perſons are more wealthy, more honourable, in greater favour or repute than we, that vexeth us? the conſideration how little time thoſe ſlender preeminences will laſt, may (if better remedies want due efficacy) ſerve toward rooting out that diſeaſe; the Pſal. 37. 1, 2. *Pſalmiſt* doth ſeveral times preſcribe it; *Fret not thy ſelf* (ſaith he) *againſt evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity, for they ſhall ſoon be cut down like the graſs, and wither as the green herb*; and, again, Pſal. 49. 17. *Be not afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his houſe is encreaſed; for when he dyeth he ſhall carry nothing away, his glory ſhall not deſcend after him*: and he being fallen into this ſcurvy diſtemper, did follow his own preſcription, Pſal. 73. 3, 17. *I was*, ſaith he, *envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked—until I went into the ſanctuary of God, then underſtood I their end; ſurely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places— How are they brought into deſolation as in a moment?* So likewiſe doth *Solomon* preſcribe: Prov. 23. 17, 18. *Let not* (ſaith he) *thine heart envy ſinners*; Why not? *becauſe ſurely there is an end, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off*: there will be a cloſe of his undeſerved proſperity, and a good ſucceſs to thy well-grounded hope: So whatever doth breed diſcontent, the reflection upon our mortal and frail ſtate will be apt to remove it.

It was that which comforted *Job*, and fortified his patience under ſo Job 14. 14, 1. grievous preſſures; *All the days of my appointed time* (ſaid he) *I will wait till my change come*: He would not be weary while he lived of his afflictiGen. 47. 9. ons, *becauſe the days of man are few, and full of trouble*: If they are *full of trouble*, and that be a ſadning conſideration; yet they are *few*, and that maketh amends, that is comfortable.

7. I add, that it is ſomewhat conſolatory to conſider, that the worſe our condition is here, the better we may hope our future ſtate will be; the more trouble and ſorrow we endure, the leſs of worldly ſatisfaction we enjoy here, the leſs puniſhment we have to fear, the more comfort we may hope to find hereafter; for as it is a woful thing to have received *our portion*, to have enjoyed *our conſolation in this life*, ſo 'tis a happy thing to have undergone our pain here. A Purgatory under-ground is probably a fable; but a Purgatory upon earth hath good foundations. God is wont ſo to order it, that all men, that eſpecially good men, ſhall undergo it: Heb. 12. 7. for, *What Son is there whom the Father doth not chaſten? All that will live* 2 Tim. 3. 12. *godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution.*

8. A like conſolation it is to conſider, that Wealth and Proſperity are great Talents, for the improvement of which we muſt render a ſtrict accompt, ſo that *to whom much is given, from him much ſhall be required*;

ſo

ſo that they are in effect a burthen; from which poverty includes an exemption; for the leſs we have, the leſs we have to do, the leſs we are reſponſible for; our burthen is ſmaller, our accompt will be more eaſie.

9. I ſhall in reference to our condition, and the nature of thoſe things which cauſe our diſcontent, but propoſe one conſideration more, or ask one queſtion: What is it that we do want, or wait for? Is it any good we want, which by our care and induſtry we can procure; Is it any evil that afflicteth us, which by the like means we can evade? If it be ſo, Why then do we not vigorouſly apply our ſelves to the buſineſs; why do we not inſtead of idle vexation, and ineffectual complaints, uſe the means offered for our relief? Do we like and love trouble? let us then be content to bear it; let us hug it and keep it cloſe; if not, let us employ the forces afforded us by nature, and by occaſion, to repel and remove it.

Τῶν μὴ δυνατῶν ἐφιεὶς ἀνδρικῶς καὶ ἡλίθιον, ξένε, δειλιαχεῖν ὡς μόνον οἴοντι τοῖς δόγμασιν τοῖς ἑαυτῶ. Epict. 3. 24.

——Πρῶτα φέρε μηδ' ἀγανάκτει,
Ἐὰν δ' ἢ πρέπει, καὶ ὅσον δύνῃ. Aur. Carm.

But if we grieve and moan, becauſe we cannot obtain ſome good above our reach, or not decline ſome unavoidable evil, what do we thereby but palpably expreſs our folly, and wilfully heighten our Woe; adding voluntary diſpleaſure to the heap of neceſſary want or pain; impreſſing more deeply on our ſelves the ſenſe of them? in ſuch a caſe patience is inſtead of a remedy, which though it do not throughly cure the malady, yet it ſomewhat alleviateth it, preventing many bad ſymptomes, and aſſwaging the paroxyſms thereof. What boots it to winſe and kick againſt fortune? to do ſo will inflame us, and make us foam, but will not relieve or eaſe us: if we cannot get out of the net, or the cage, to flutter and flounce will do nothing but batter and bruiſe us.

——*Levius fit patientia*
Quicquid corrigere eſt nefas. Hor.

Animus æquus optimum eſt aduersus omnia condimentum. Plaut. *Rud.*

Ἐπὶ ζημίᾳ χρημάτων καὶ θανάτῳ, καὶ ἀῤῥωστίᾳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τοῖς ἀνωφελῆσιν ἡμῖν δεινοῖς ἀλγοῦντες καὶ ἀθυμοῦντες ἐ μόνον ἐδὲν ὠφελοῦμεν ἀπὸ ταυτῆς καρτερόμενα παραμυθίαν ἀλλὰ καὶ ὀπτεύομεν τὰ λυπᾶ. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. 3.

Οἱ δὲ τῷ πάθει δυκολαίνοντες ἐδὲν μᾶλλον καρδαίνουσι ὁλοφυρόμενοι, ἀνιαρῶς δὲ διάκουνται, καὶ παροξυνῶσι μᾶλλον ἢ ἴλεων ἑαυτοῖς Theod. *Ep.* 15.

But farther, to allay our diſcontents, let us conſider the World, and general ſtate of Men here.

1. Look *firſt* upon the World, as it is commonly managed and ordered by Men: Thou perhaps art diſpleaſed, that thou doſt not proſper and thrive therein, that thou doſt not ſhare in the goods of it; that its accommodations and preferments are all ſnapt from thee; that thy pretences are not ſatisfied, and thy deſigns fail; this thou doſt take to be ſomewhat hard, and unequal; and therefore art grieved. But if thou art wiſe, thou ſhouldſt not wonder; if thou art good, thou ſhouldſt not be vexed hereat: for thou haſt not, perhaps, any capacity for this World; thy temper and diſpoſition are not framed to ſuit with its way; thy principles and rules do claſh with it, thy reſolutions and deſigns do not well comport with proſperity here; thou canſt not, or wilt not uſe the means needful to compaſs worldly ends: Thou perhaps haſt a meek, quiet, modeſt, ſincere, ſteady diſpoſition; thou canſt not be pragmatical, and boiſterous, eager and fierce, importunately troubleſome, intolerably confident, unaccomptably verſatile and various: Thou haſt certain pedantick notions about right and wrong, certain Romantick fancies about another World (unlike to this) which thou doſt ſtiffly adhere to, and which have an influence upon thy actions: Thou haſt a ſqueamiſh conſcience, which cannot reliſh this, cannot digeſt that advantageous courſe of proceeding; a

ſcru-

ſcrupulous humour, that hampereth thee, and curbeth thee from attempting many things which would ſerve thy purpoſe; thou haſt a ſpice of ſilly generoſity, which maketh divers profitable ways of acting (ſuch as forging and feigning, ſupplanting others by detraction and calumny, ſoothing and flattering people) to be below thee, and unworthy of thee; Thou thinkeſt thy ſelf obliged, and art peremptorily reſolved to obſerve ſtrict rules of juſtice, of humanity, of charity, to ſpeak as thou meaneſt, to do as thou wouldſt be done to, to wrong no man any-wiſe, to conſider and tender the caſe of other men as thine own: Thy deſigns are honeſt and moderate, conducible to (or at leaſt conſiſtent with) the publick good, injurious, or hurtful to no man; Thou carrieſt on thy deſigns by fair ways, by a modeſt care, and harmleſs diligence; nor canſt be drawn to uſe any other, how ſeemingly needful ſoever, which do ſavour of fraud, violence, any ſort of wrong or baſeneſs: Thou haſt an honeſt pride and haughtineſs of mind, which will not let thee condeſcend to uſe thoſe ſly tricks, crooked ways and ſhifts, which commonly are the compendious and moſt effectual ways of accompliſhing deſigns here: Thou art, in fine (like *Helvidius Priſcus*) in thy dealings and proceedings, *pervicax recti*, wilfully and *peeviſhly honeſt*: Such an one perhaps art thou, and ſuch is thy way; And canſt thou hope to be any body, or get any thing here? Shall ſuch a ſuperſtitious fop, ſuch a conſcientious limpleton, ſuch a baſhful ſneaksby, ſo phantaſtick a philoſopher pretend to any thing here? No, thou art here *piſcis in aridâ*, quite out of thy element; this World is not for *thee* to thrive in.

Τὸ γὰρ ἦθος χαλιῶν τι καὶ ἄπτηχυον καὶ πρὸς τὰς τῶν ἐν σφαῖρᾳ πάντας ἀνεπιδεκτον. Naz. Ep. 63.

This World is for Worldlings to poſſeſs and enjoy: *It was* (ſay the *Rabbins*) *made for the preſumptuous*; and although God did not altogether deſign it for them, yet men have almoſt made it ſo: They are beſt qualified to thrive in it, who can luſtily buſtle and ſcramble; who can fiercely ſwagger and huff; who can fawn; who can wind and wriggle like a Serpent; who can finely cog and gloze; who can neatly ſhuffle and juggle; who can ſhrewdly over-reach and undermine others; thoſe ſlippery wily artiſts, who can veere any whither with any Wind; thoſe men of impregnable confidence, who can inſiſt upon any pretences; who can be indefatigably and irreſiſtibly urgent, nor will be repulſed or baffled by any means; thoſe who have a temper ſo laxe and ſupple, that they can bend it to any compliance advantageous to them; who have a ſpirit ſo limber, that they can ſtretch it any whither; who have face enough, and conſcience little enough to do any thing; who have no certain principles, but ſuch as will ſort with their intereſts: no rules but ſuch *Lesbian* and leaden ones, that eaſily may be accommodated to their purpoſes: whoſe deſigns all tend to their own private advantage, without any regard to the publick, or to the good of others; who can uſe any means conducible to ſuch deſigns, bogling at nothing, which ſerveth their purpoſe; nor caring what they ſay, be it true or falſe; what they do, be it right or wrong, ſo it ſeem profitable: this is called wiſdom, prudence, dexterity, ability, knowledge of men, and of the world, and I know not what beſide; in the *Scripture* the *wiſdom of the world*, and *of the fleſh*, *craft*, *guile*, *deceit*, πανουργία, &c. For ſuch Perſons it is to flouriſh in this World; *Behold, theſe* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *are the ungodly, who proſper in the world; and who encreaſe in riches; They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men; Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have*

Quod facilimum factu eſt, pravus, & callidus bonos & modeſtos antiebat. Tac. *Hiſt.* 1.

Ἐφιάλτης σεσηγὼς ὀνειδίσαι σὲ καὶ νὴ τὸν πλοῦτον, τὸ δ' ἕτερον, ἔφη, διὰ τί οὐ λέγεις; ὅτι δίκαιός εἰμι. Æl. 13. 39.

Pſal. 73. 12. 5, 7.

have more than heart could wish: They it is who love the World, who seek it, who study and labour for it; Who spend all their time, and employ all their care about it; And is it not fit they should have it? Is it not a pity they should miss it? Is it not natural, that they *who sow to the flesh, should reap from the flesh?* Should not they who use the proper means obtain the end? Should not they arrive at the place, who proceed in the direct road thither? 1 Joh. 2. 16.

But for thee, who canst not find in thy heart to use the means, why dost thou hope to compass the end; or grieve for not attaining it? Why dost thou blend and jumble such inconsistences together, as the eager desires of this, and the hopes of another World? It becometh not such a gallant to whine and pule. If thou wilt be brave, be brave indeed; stoutly and throughly; be not a double-hearted mongrel; think not of satisfying thy mind, and driving on other interests together; of enjoying the conceit of being an honest man, with the design of being a rich or great man; of arriving to the happiness of the other World, and attaining prosperity in this? Wouldst thou enjoy both these? What conscience is there in that? Leave rather this World unto those, who are more fit for it, who seem better to deserve it, who venture so much, and take such pains for it; do not go to rob them of this slender reward; but with content see them to enjoy the fruits of their labour and hazard: Be thou satisfied with the consequences of thy vertuous resolutions and proceedings; if it be worth thy while to live innocently, modestly and conscientiously, do it, and be satisfied; spoil not thine expectations by repining at the want of those things, which thy circumstances render incompatible with them: Follow effectually the holy *Patriarchs* and *Apostles*, who, without regret, forsook all, and chearfully went thither, whither conscience and duty called them; if thou art not willing to do so, Why dost thou pretend to the same principles, or hope for the like rewards? But leaving the consideration of the World as man hath made it; Consider that this World is not in its nature or design, a place of perfect ease and convenience, of pure delight and satisfaction: What is this World but a region of tumult and trouble; a Theatre of vanity and disasters; the Kingdom of care, of fear, of grief and pain; of satiety, of disappointment, of regret and repentance? We came not hither to do our Will, or enjoy our pleasure; we are not born to make Laws for our selves, or to pick our condition here: No, this world is a place of banishment from our first Countrey, and the original felicity we were designed to; this life is a state of travel toward another *better Country* and seat of rest: and well it is, in such cases, (well it is, I say, for us as Exiles and Travellers) if we can find any tolerable accommodation, if we can make any hard shift; It should not be strange unto us, if in this our peregrination we do meet with rough passages, foul ways, hard lodging, scant or course fare; if we complain of such things, we do not surely consider where we are, whence we came, whither we are going; we forget that we are the Sons of *Adam*, the Heirs of sin and sorrow, who have forfeited our rest and joy upon Earth; we consider not, how unavoidable the effects are of that fatal condemnation and curse, which followed our first transgression; we mind not that the perfection and purity of the blessings we have lost is not to be found on this side the celestial Paradise. This world is purposely made somewhat unpleasant to us, lest we should over-much delight in it, be unwilling to part with

1 Cor. 10. 13.
Πειρασμὸν ἐστιν ὁ βίος τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ γῆς. Job 7. 1. Chrys. *ad Stag.* 2. *(p. 106.)*

Οὐ νενομοθετηκότες ἡλθομεν εἰς τὸν βίον, &c. Plut. *ad* Apollon.

Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ πολὺν φύσει καὶ μοχθηρὸν ἡμῶν τὸν βίον κατεσκεύασεν, ἵνα μὴ ἐνταῦθα συναθύμως διαλέωμεν ὀλιγωρίαν τῶν μελλόντων λαβόντες, εἰ γὰρ νῦν, &c. Chrys. *ad* S. 5.

with it, wiſh to ſet up our reſt here, and ſay, *Bonum eſt eſſe hic*; *It is good for us to be here.*

This life is a ſtate of probation and exerciſe, like to that (which prefigured and repreſented it) of God's People in the Wilderneſs, wherein *God leadeth us* through many difficulties and hazards, in many wants and hardſhips, to *humble and prove us*, in order to the fitting us for another more happy ſtate.

Deut. 8. 23.

Λογίζεσθαι χρὴ, ὅτι ὁ μὲν ἡμᾶς ἐπαίδλων, καὶ ἡμᾶς στεφάνων καιρὸς ὁ μέλλων ὄζιν εἰσῶν. ἡμᾶς δὲ παλαισμάτων καὶ ἡμᾶς ἱδρώτων παρῶν. Chryſ. *ad Stagir.* 2.

Πειρασμὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ εἴληφεν εἰ μὴ ἀνθρώπινος. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

No temptation therefore (or affliction) *can ſeize upon us, but ſuch as is humane*; that is, ſuch as is natural and proper to men, 'tis the conſideration, which St. *Paul* uſeth to comfort and ſupport us in troubles; and a plainly good one it is, for ſeeing *Man* (as *Eliphas* ſaith) *is born to trouble as the ſparks fly upward*; that nothing is more natural to any thing, than trouble is to us; if we are diſpleaſed therewith, we are in effect diſpleaſed that we are men; it implyeth that we gladly would put off our nature, and ceaſe to be our ſelves; we grieve that we are come to live in this World, and as well might we be vexed that we are not Angels; or that we are not yet in Heaven, which is the only place exempt from inconveniences and troubles, where alone *there is no ſorrow, no clamour, no pain.*

Eccluſ. 40. 1. Ἀσχολία ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c.

Job 5. 7.

Vid. Max. Tyr. *diſſ.* 25. *p.* 244.

It was the doom of man to eat his bread in ſorrow all the days of his life. *Gen.* 3. 17.

Eccl. 1. 14. *All is vanity and vexation of ſpirit.*

Apoc. 21. 4.

It hath always been, and it will ever be an univerſal complaint and lamentation, that the life of man and trouble are individual companions, continually, and cloſely ſticking one to the other; that life and miſery are but ſeveral names of the ſame thing; that our ſtate here is nothing elſe, but a combination of various evils (made up of cares, of labours, of dangers, of diſappointments, of diſcords, of diſquiets, of diſeaſes, of manifold pains and ſorrows) that all ages, from wailing infancy to querulous decrepitneſs, and all conditions, from the careful Sceptre to the painful ſpade, are fraught with many great inconveniences peculiar to each of them; that all the face of the Earth is overſpread with miſchiefs as with a general and perpetual deluge; that nothing perfectly ſound, nothing ſafe, nothing ſtable, nothing ſerene is here to be found; this with one ſad voice all mankind reſoundeth; this our *Poets* are ever moanfully ſinging, this our *Philoſophers* do gravely inculcate; this the experience of all times loudly proclaimeth: For what are all Hiſtories but continual regiſters of the evils incident to men; what do they all deſcribe, but wars and ſlaughters, mutinies and ſeditions, tumults and confuſions, devaſtations and ruines? What do they tell us, but of men furiouſly ſtriving together, circumventing, ſpoiling, deſtroying one another? What do we daily hear reported, but cruel broils, bloudy battles, and tragical events; great numbers of men ſlain, wounded, hurried into captivity; Cities ſacked and raſed, Countries haraſſed and depopulated; Kingdoms and Commonwealths overturned? What do we ſee before us but men carking, toiling, bickering; ſome worn out with labour, ſome pining away for want, ſome groaning under pain? And amidſt ſo many common miſeries and misfortunes, in ſo generally confuſed and diſmal a ſtate of things, is it not ridiculouſly abſurd for us, doth it not argue in us a prodigious fondneſs of ſelf-love, heinouſly to reſent, or impatiently to bemoan our particular, and private croſſes? May not reaſonably that expoſtulation

Ὁ βίος ἀληθῶς ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ ξυμφορά.
Βίος γὰρ ὄνομ' ἔχει, πόνος δ' ἔργῳ πέλει. Eurip.

Quid eſt diu vivere, niſi diu torqueri? Aug.

Πλεῖν μὲν γὰρ γαῖα κακῶν, πλεῖν δὲ θάλασσα. Heſiod.

Ferre quam ſortem patiuntur omnes
Nemo recuſet. Sen. *Troad.*

Ideo mihi videtur rerum naturæ, quod graviſſimum fecit, commune feciſſe, ut crudelitatem fati conſolaretur æqualitas. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 21.

lation of *Jeremy* to *Baruch* reach us? *The Lord ſaith thus, Behold, that which I have built, I will break down; and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land; And ſeekeſt thou great things for thy ſelf? ſeek them not; for behold I will bring evil on all fleſh.* Jer. 45. 4, 5.

4. Again, if we more cloſely and particularly ſurvey the ſtates of other men (of our brethren every-where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our caſe with theirs, our condition hardly can appear to us ſo bad, but that we have many conſorts and aſſociates therein; many as ill, many far worſe beſtead than our ſelves. How many of our Brethren in the World may we obſerve conflicting with extream penury and diſtreſs; how many undergoing continual hard drudgeries to maintain their lives; how many ſorely pinched with hunger and cold; how many tormented with grievous ſickneſs; how many oppreſſed with debt; how many ſhut up under cloſe reſtraint; how many detained in horrible ſlavery; how many by the waſting rage of War rifled of their goods, driven from their homes, diſpoſſeſſed of all comfortable ſubſiſtence? How many, in fine, paſſing their lives in all the inconveniences of rude, beggarly, ſordid and ſavage barbariſm? And who of us have, in any meaſure, taſted of theſe, or of the like calamities? Yet are theſe Sufferers, all of them, the ſame in nature, with us; many of them, (as reaſon, as humility, as charity do oblige us to believe) deſerve as well, divers of them much better than our ſelves: What reaſon then can we have to conceive our caſe ſo hard, or to complain thereof? Were we the only perſons expoſed to trouble, or the ſingle marks of adverſe fortune; could we truly ſay with the *Prophet*; *Behold, if there be any ſorrow like my ſorrow*: We might ſeem a little unhappy; but ſince we have ſo much good company in our conceived Woe; ſince it is ſo ordinary a thing to be poor, and diſtreſſed; ſince *our caſe is* (as the *Poet* ſpeaketh) *not rare, but commonly known, trite, and drawn out from the lap of lots, offered to men by fortune*: Since pitiful objects do thus environ and encloſe us; 'tis plainly reaſonable, humane and juſt, that we ſhould without murmuring take, and bear our lot: For what priviledge have we to alledge, that we rather than others ſhould be untouched by the grievances, to which mankind is obnoxious? Whence may we pretend to be the ſpecial favorites, mignons, privado's and darlings of fortune? Why may not God as well deal with us, as he doth with other men; what grounds have we to challenge, or to expect, that he ſhould be partial toward us; why ſhould we imagine, that he muſt continually do miracles in our behalf, cauſing all thoſe evils, which fall upon our neighbours all about to ſkip over us, bedewing us, like *Gideon's* *fleece*, with plenty and joy, while all the earth beſide is dry; cauſing us, like the *three children*, to walk in this wide furnace, unſcorched and unſinged by the flames encompaſſing us? Are we not men framed of the ſame mould; are we not ſinners guilty of like offences, with the meaneſt Peaſant, the pooreſt beggar, the moſt wretched ſlave (if ſo, then a parity of Fortune with any men doth become us, and may be due to us; then it is a perverſe and unjuſt frowardneſs to be diſpleaſed with our lot) we may, if we pleaſe, pity the common ſtate of men, but we cannot reaſonably complain of our own; doing ſo plainly doth argue, that we do unmeaſurably overprize, and overlove our ſelves. When once a great *King* did exceſſively, and obſtinately grieve for the death of his Wife, whom he tenderly loved, a *Philoſopher* obſerving it, told him, "That he was ready to comfort him by reſtoring her to life, ſuppoſing Lam. 1. 12.

——*Nec rara videmus*
Quæ patoris.; caſus multis hic cognitus & jam
Tritus, & è medio fortunæ ductus acervo. Juv. *Sat.* 13. *v.* 8.

Te nunc delicias extra communia cenſes
Ponendum, &c. Juv. *Sat.* 13. *v.* 140.

" onely, that he would ſupply what was needful toward the performing " it; " The *King* ſaid he was ready to furniſh him with any thing; the *Philoſopher* anſwer'd, " That he was provided with all things neceſſary, " except one thing; what that was the *King* demanded; he replied, That *if he would upon his Wives Tomb inſcribe the names of three perſons, who never mourned, ſhe preſently would revive*: the *King*, after inquiry, told the *Philoſopher*, That he could not find one ſuch man, *Why then, O abſurdeſt of all men* (ſaid the *Philoſopher* ſmiling) *art thou not aſhamed to moan as if thou hadſt alone fallen into ſo grievous a caſe; when as thou canſt not find one perſon, that ever was free from ſuch domeſtick afflictions?* So might the naming one perſon, exempted from inconveniences, like to thoſe we undergo, be ſafely propoſed to us as a certain cure of ours; but if we find the condition impoſſible, then is the generality of the caſe a ſufficient ground of content to us; then may we, as the wiſe *Poet* adviſeth, *ſolace our own evils by the evils of others*, ſo frequent and obvious to us.

Ἔτι ὦ πάντων ἀτοπώτατε θέλω εἰς ἀναλθῆναι, ὡς μὴ θ' ἁλγεινῷ τοσούτῳ συμπλακεὶς, ὁ μηδὲ ἕνα σὲ πώποτε γεγονότων ἄμοιρον οἰκείων πάθους ἔχων δύρεῖν. Jul. *Ep.* 38.

Παρηγόρει τὰ κακὰ σῖ ἑτέρων κακῶν. Menand.

5. We are indeed very apt to look upward toward thoſe few, who, in ſuppoſed advantages of life (in wealth, dignity, or reputation) do ſeem to tranſcend, or to precede us, grudging and repining at their fortune; but ſeldom do we caſt down our eyes on thoſe innumerably many good people, who lie beneath us in all manner of accommodations, pitying their mean, or hard condition; like Racers we look forward, and purſue thoſe who go before us, but reflect not backward, or conſider thoſe who come behind us: two or three outſhining us in ſome ſlender piece of proſperity, doth raiſe diſſatisfaction in us; while the doleful ſtate of millions doth little affect us with any regard or compaſſion: hence ſo general diſcontent ſpringeth, hence ſo few are ſatisfied with their condition; and epidemical eye-ſore moleſting every man; for there is no man, of whatſoever condition, who is not in ſome deſirable things outſtripped by others; none is ſo high in fortune, but another in Wit or Wiſdom, in Health, or ſtrength, or beauty, in reputation or eſteem of men may ſeem to excel him; he therefore looking with an *evil* or envious *eye* on ſuch perſons, and with ſenſeleſs diſregard paſſing over the reſt of men, doth eaſily thereby loſe his eaſe and ſatisfaction from his own Eſtate: Whereas if we would conſider the caſe of moſt men, we ſhould ſee abundant reaſon to be ſatisfied with our own; if we would a little feel the calamities of our neighbours, we ſhould little reſent our own croſſes; a kindly commiſeration of others more grievous diſaſters would drown the ſenſe of our leſſer diſappointments.

Nulli ad aliena reſpicienti ſua placent. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 31.

——*Neque ſe majori pauperiorum*
Turbæ comparet, hunc atque hunc ſuperare laboret:
Ut cum carceribus, &c. Hor. *Sat.* 1.

Inde fit ut nemo, qui ſe vixiſſe beatum
Dicat; &c. Hor. *Sat.* 1.

Si vis gratus eſſe adverſus Deos, & adverſus vitam tuam, cogita quam multos anteceſſeris. Sen. *Ep.* 15.

Nunquam erit felix, quem torquebit felicior. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 31. *Vid. Ib.*

If with any competent heedfulneſs we view perſons and things before us, we ſhall eaſily diſcern, that what abſolutely ſeemeth great and weighty, is indeed comparatively very ſmall and light; that things are not ſo unequally diſpenſed, but that we have our full ſhare in good, and no more than our part in evil; * that *Socrates* had reaſon to ſuppoſe, that, *if we ſhould bring into one common ſtock all our miſhaps, ſo that each ſhould receive his portion of them, gladly the moſt would take up their own, and go their ways*; that conſequently it is both iniquity and folly in us to complain of our lot.

Εἰ συνενέγκαιμεν εἰς τὸ κοινὸν τὰς ἀτυχίας, ὥστε διαλέσθαι τὸ ἴσον ἕκαστον, ἀσμένως ἂν τὰς πλείας τὰς ἑαυτῶν λαβόντας ἀπιέναι. Plut. *Apoll.*

* That at worſt we are *Extremi primorum, extremis uſque priores.* Hor. *Epiſt.* 2. 2.

6. If

6. If even we would take care diligently to compare our ſtate with the ſtate of thoſe, whom we are apt moſt to admire and envy, it would afford matter of conſolation, and content unto us. What is the ſtate of the greateſt perſons (of the Worlds *Princes* and *Grandees*) what but a ſtate encompaſſed with ſnares, and temptations numberleſs; which without extreme caution, and conſtancy, force of reaſon, and command of all appetites, and paſſions cannot, be avoided; and ſeldom are? What but a ſtate of pompous trouble, and gay ſervility, of living in continual noiſe and ſtir, environed with crouds and throngs, of being ſubject to the urgency of buſineſs, and the tediouſneſs of ceremony; of being abuſed by perfidious ſervants, and mocked by vile flatterers; of being expoſed to common cenſure and obloquy, to miſrepreſentation, miſconſtruction and ſlander; having the eyes of all men intent upon their actions, and as many ſevere judges as watchful ſpectatours of them; of being accomptable for many mens faults, and bearing the blame of all miſcarriages about them; of being reſponſible in conſcience, for the miſcarriages and miſhaps which come from the influence of our counſels, our examples, *&c.* of being peſter'd and purſu'd with pretences, with ſuits, with complaints, the neceſſary reſult whereof is to diſpleaſe or provoke very many, to oblige or ſatisfie very few, of being frequently ingaged in reſentments of ingratitude, of treachery, of neglects, of defects in duty, and breaches of truſt toward them; of being conſtrained to comply with the humours and opinion of men; of anxious care to keep, and jealous fear of loſing all; of danger and being objected to the traiterous attempts of bold male-contents, of fierce zealots and wild fanaticks; of wanting the moſt ſolid and ſavoury comforts of life, true friendſhip, free converſation, certain leaſure, privacy and retiredneſs, for enjoying themſelves, their time, their thoughts as they think good; of ſatiety and being cloyed with all ſorts of enjoyments: In fine, of being paid with falſe coin for all their cares and pains, receiving for them ſcarce any thing more, but empty ſhews of reſpect, and hollow acclamations of praiſe; (whence the *Pſalmiſt* might well ſay, *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lye*; a lye, for that their ſtate cheateth us, appearing ſo ſpecious, yet being really ſo inconvenient and troubleſome.) Such is the ſtate of the greateſt men; ſuch as hath made wiſe Princes weary of themſelves, ready to acknowledge, that if men knew the weight of a Crown, none would take it up, apt to think with Pope *Adrian*, who made this *Epitaph* for himſelf; *Here lyeth* Adrian *the* Sixth, *who thought nothing in his life to have befallen him more unhappy, than that he ruled*: Such, in fine, their ſtate, as upon due conſideration we ſhould, were it offered to our choice, never embrace; ſuch indeed, as in ſober judgment, we cannot prefer before the moſt narrow and inferiour fortune: How then can we reaſonably be diſpleaſed with our condition, when we may even pity *Emperours* and *Kings*, when, in reality, we are as well, perhaps are much better than they.

Magna ſervitus eſt magna fortuna, &c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 26.

Perſonata felicitas. Sen. *Ep.* 80.
Pſal. 62. 9.
——*adulandi certamen eſt, & unum omnium amicorum officium, una contentio quis blandiſſime fallat.* Sen. *de Benef.* 6. 30.
Vid. optime diſſerentem.
Vid. & de Clem. 1. 19.
Et ad Polyb. 26.
Antigonus. *Neſcitis amici, quid mali ſit imperare, &c.* Saturninus *apud* Vopiſcum.
Hic ſitus eſt Adrian. VI. *qui nihil ſibi in vita infelicius duxit, quam quod imperavit.* Lud. Guicciard. P. Jovius *in vit.*

Nihil difficilius quam bene imperare. Diocleſ. *apud* Vopiſc. *in* Aureliano.

7. Farther, it may induce and ingage us to be content, to conſider what commonly hath been the lot of good men in the World: We ſhall, if we ſurvey the Hiſtories of all times, find the beſt men to have ſuſtained moſt grie-

Conſider what calamities great, powerful glorious men have endured; *Cræſ. Polycr. Pomp.* &c. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 25.

Οἱ ἀφ' Ἑλλήνων ἄριστοι πενίᾳ διέζων ἅπαντα τὸν βίον. (Aristides, Phocion, Epaminondas, Pelopidas.) *Æl.* xii. 9. 11. 43.

Lamachus, Socrates, Ephialtes. Abel, Noe, &c. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6 *p.* 107.

vous croſſes and troubles; ſcarce is there in holy Scripture recorded any perſon eminent and illuſtrious for goodneſs, who have not taſted deeply of vvants and diſtreſſes. *Abraham, the Father of the faithful,* and eſpecial *friend of God,* vvas called out of his Countrey, and from his Kindred, to vvander in a ſtrange land, and lodge in Tents, vvithout any fixed habitation. *Jacob* ſpent a great part of his life in ſlaviſh toil, and in his old age vvas in reflection upon his life moved to ſay, *that the days of his pilgrimage had been few and evil.* *Joſeph* vvas maligned and perſecuted by his Brethren, ſold avvay for a ſlave, ſlandered for a moſt heinous crime, thruſt into a grievous priſon, vvhere *his feet were hurt with fetters, and his ſoul came into iron.* *Moſes* vvas forced to fly avvay for his life, to become a vagabond in a foreign place, to feed ſheep for his livelihood; to ſpend aftervvards the beſt of his life in conteſting vvith an obſtinately perverſe Prince, and in leading a miſtruſtful, refractory, mutinous people, for forty years time, through a vaſt and wild deſart. *Job,* what a ſtupendious heap of miſchiefs did together fall, and lie heavy upon him? (*Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me,* he might well ſay.) *David,* How often was he plunged in ſaddeſt extremity, and reduced to the hardeſt ſhifts; being *hunted like a partridge in the wilderneſs* by an envious Maſter, forced to counterfeit madneſs for his ſecurity among barbarous infidels; diſpoſſeſſed of his kingdom, and perſecuted by his own moſt favoured ſon; deſerted by his ſervants, reproached and ſcorned by his ſubjects? *Elias* was driven long to ſculk for his life, and to ſhift for his livelihood in the Wilderneſs. *Jeremy* was treated as an Impoſtour and a Traitour, and caſt into a miry Dungeon; finding matter from his ſufferings for his doleful lamentations, and having thence occaſion to exclaim, *I am the man that have ſeen affliction by the rod of his wrath,* &c. *Which of the Prophets were not perſecuted,* and miſuſed? as St. *Stephen* asked. The *Apoſtles* were pinched with all kinds of want, haraſſed with all ſorts of toil, expoſed to all manner of hazards, perſecuted with all variety of contumelies, and pains that can be imagined: Above all, our Lord himſelf beyond expreſſion was *a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief,* ſurpaſſing all men in ſuffering as he did excel them in dignity, and in vertue; extream poverty, *having not ſo much as where to lay his head,* was his portion; to undergo continual labour and travel, without any mixture of carnal eaſe or pleaſure, was his ſtate; in return for the higheſt good will, and choiceſt benefits to receive moſt cruel hatred, and grievous injuries, to be loaded with the bittereſt reproaches, the fouleſt ſlanders, the foreſt pains which moſt ſpiteful malice could invent, or fierceſt rage inflict, this was his lot: *Am I poor,* ſo may one ſay, was he to extremity; Am I ſlighted of the World? ſo was he notoriouſly; Am I diſappointed, and croſſed in my deſigns? ſo was he continually, all his moſt painful endeavours having ſmall effect; Am I deſerted or betrayed of Friends? ſo was he by thoſe who were moſt intimate, and moſt obliged to him; Am I reviled, ſlandered, miſuſed? Was not he ſo beyond all compariſon moſt outrageouſly.

Gen. 47. 9. Pſal. 105. 18. Σίδηρον διῆλθεν ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ.

Socrates, Cato, Regulus, Phocion, *&c. Magnum exemplum niſi mala fortuna non invenit.*

Vid. Chryſ. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 27. *p.* 168. & *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 10. *p.* 107. Job 13. 27. 1 Sam. 26. 20.

Νῦν γὰρ πάλαι ἐξ ὧν γεγόνασιν ἄνθρωποι ἅπαντες οἱ τῷ θεῷ φίλοι τῷ συγγενῆ καὶ ὁμιλήτῳ καὶ μυρίων γήμοντι δεινῶν ἐκλελοίδησαν βίῳ. Chryſ. *in Mart. Ægypt. T.* 5. 522.

Ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς ἰῶδην οἱ δίκαιοι, τὰς ἀλύσεις πάντας ὅπως ἠγάγῳ ὁ θεὸς διὰ θλίψεως. Chryſ. *in* 2 Cor. *Or.* 27.

Lam. 3. 1. Acts 7. 52. 1 Cor. 4. & 7.

Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 93. Iſa. 53. 3.

Matt. 8. 20.

Ἐκ γὰρ ἦρ πρώτων φύντων ἀνθρώπων μέχει τοῦ παρόντος καιροῦ τοὺς ἅπαντας ἐσπουδακότας σέβειν θεὸν ὄξιν διῆλθε παρὰ ἦρ συμβεβιωκότων ἀνθρώπων ἠδικημένους καὶ πολλοῖς ἄλγεσι πεκεντημένους ἀναιρεῖς. Theod. *Ep.* 132.

Heb. 11. 38.

Have all theſe, and many more, of *whom the world was not worthy,* undergone all ſorts of inconvenience, being *deſtitute, afflicted, tormented;*

And

And ſhall we then diſdain, or be ſorry to be found in ſuch company? *Having ſuch a cloud of martyrs, Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us.* Heb. 12. 1. Is it not an Honour, ſhould it not be a comfort to us, that we do, in condition, reſemble them? If God hath thus dealt with thoſe, who of all men have been deareſt to him, ſhall we take it ill at his hands, that he, in any manner, dealeth ſo with us? Can we pretend, can we hope, can we even wiſh to be uſed better, than Gods firſt-born, and our Lord himſelf hath been? If we do, are we not monſtruouſly fond and arrogant? eſpecially conſidering, that it is not onely an ordinary fortune, but the peculiar character of Gods choſen, and children, to be often croſſed, checked, and corrected; Even *Pagans* have obſerved it, and avowed there is great reaſon for it; *God* (ſaith *Seneca*) *hath a fatherly mind toward good men; and ſtrongly loveth them——therefore after the manner of ſevere parents, he educateth them hardly*, &c. Sen. *de Provid. c.* 2. The *Apoſtle* doth in expreſs terms aſſure us thereof; for, *whom* (ſaith he) *the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons——but if ye be without chaſtiſement, whereof all* (that is, all good men, and genuine Sons of God) *are partakers, then are ye baſtards, and not ſons.* Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. Would we be illegitimated, or expunged from the number of God's true children; would we be diveſted of his ſpecial regard and good-will? if not, Why do we not gladly embrace, and willingly ſuſtain adverſity, which is by himſelf declared ſo peculiar a badge of his children, ſo conſtant a mark of his favour? if *all* good men do (as the *Apoſtle* aſſerteth) *partake thereof*; ſhall we, by diſpleaſure at it, ſhew, that we deſire to be aſſuredly none of that party, that we affect to be diſcarded from that holy and happy ſociety? *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, that ye ſhall weep and lament, but the world ſhall rejoice.* John 16. 20. It is peculiarly the lot of Chriſtians, as ſuch, in conformity to their afflicted Saviour; they are herein *predeſtinated to be conformable to his image; to this they are appointed.* Rom. 8. 29. 1 Theſſ. 3. 3. (*Let no man, ſaith St. Paul, be moved by theſe afflictions, for ye know, that we are appointed thereunto:*) Phil. 3. 10. to this they are called (*if when we do well, ſaith St. Peter, and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called*) this is propounded to them as a condition to be undertaken, and undergone by them as ſuch; they are by profeſſion *crucigeri*, bearers of the croſs; (*If any one will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me; Every one that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution*) by this are they admitted into the ſtate of Chriſtians; (*by many afflictions we muſt enter into the kingdom of heaven*) this doth qualify them for enjoying the glorious rewards, which their religion propoundeth; (*We are coheirs with Chriſt; ſo that, if we ſuffer together, we ſhall alſo together be glorified with him; If we endure, we ſhall alſo reign with him;*) * And ſhall we then pretend to be Chriſtians, ſhall we claim any benefit from thence, if we are unwilling to ſubmit to the Law, to attend the call, to comply with the terms thereof? Will we enjoy its priviledges, can we hope for its rewards, if we will not contentedly undergo what it requireth? Shall we arrive to the end it propoundeth, without going in the way it preſcribeth, the way which our Lord himſelf doth lead us in, and himſelf hath trod before us?

Eccluſ. 2. 1. Τέκνον ἐι προσέρχῃ δουλευειν κυριῳ ἑτοίμασον τὴν ψυχὴν σου εἰς πειρασμόν.

Mat. 16. 24. 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 12.
John 16. 33. Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ θλῖψιν ἕξετε.
Quotam partem anguſtiarum perpeſſus ſum qui cruci milito. Hier. *ad* Aſellam, *Ep.* 99.
Acts 14. 22.
Vid. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 201. (*ad* Theclam.)
2 Tim. 2. 12.
(Phil. 3. 10.)
* It is a priviledge of Chriſtians, in favour beſtowed on them; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη Phil. 1. 29.
Our glory Eph. 3. 13.

Ὑπομονῆς ἔχετε χρείαν Heb. 10. 36.
Faith and Patience are conſorts. Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10.

In

In fine, seeing adversity is, as hath been declared, a thing so natural to all men, so common to most men, so incident to great men, so proper to good men, so peculiar to Christians, we have great reason to observe
1 Pet. 4. 12. the *Apostles* advice; *Beloved, wonder not concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as if some strange thing happened to you*; we should not wonder at it as a strange, or uncouth thing, that we are engaged in any trouble or inconvenience here; we are consequently not to be affected with it as a thing very grievous.

SERMON IX.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever State, &c.

1 Tim. 6. 6. Ἔστι δὲ μέγας πορισμὸς ἡ εὐσέβεια μετ' αὐταρκείας.

MOreover considering the nature of this duty it self, may be a great inducement and aid to the practice of it.

1. It is it self a sovereign remedy, for all poverty and all sufferance; removing them, or allaying all the mischief they
Aug. *de Civ. Dei.* 1. 8. can do us. It is well and truly said by St. *Austine*, *Interest non qualia, sed qualis quis patiatur*; *It is no matter what, but how disposed a man suffereth*: The chief mischief any adversity can do us is to render us discontent, in that consisteth all the sting, and all the venom thereof; which thereby being voided, adversity can signify nothing prejudicial, or noxious to us; all distraction, all distemper, all disturbance from it is by the antidote of contentedness prevented or corrected. He that hath his desires moderated to a temper sutable with his condition, that hath his passions composed and settled agreeably to his circumstances, what can make any grievous impression on him, or render him any-wise miserable? He that taketh himself to have enough, what doth he need? he that is well-pleased to be as he is, how can he be better, What can the largest Wealth, or highest prosperity in the World yeild more, or better than satisfaction of mind? He that hath this most essential ingredient of felicity, is he not thence in effect most fortunate? is not at least his condition as good as that of the most prosperous.

Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est. Sen. *Ep.* 2.

Nemo aliorum sensu miser est, sed suo; & ideo non possunt cujusquam falso judicio esse miseri, qui sunt vere conscientia sua beati. Nulli beatiores sunt, quam qui hoc sunt quod volunt. Salv. *de Gubern. Dei*, 1.

Οὐ γὰρ τὸ ποιῆσαί τι χρηστὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παθεῖν τι γενναῖον πολλὰς ἔχει τὰς ἀμοιβὰς καὶ μεγάλα τὰ ἔπαθλα, &c. Chrys. *ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 3. *Vid. p.* 73.

2. As good do I say? yea is it not plainly much better, than can arise merely from any secular prosperity? for satisfaction springing from rational consideration, and vertuous disposition of mind is indeed far more precious, more noble and worthy, more solid and durable, more sweet and

and delectable, than that which any poſſeſſion, or fruition of worldly goods can afford: The τὸ ἄφθαρτον τῦ πραέως καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος, *incorruptibility* (at St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *of a meek and quiet ſpirit is before God of great price*; *before God*, that is, according to the moſt upright and certain judgment it is the moſt precious and valuable thing in the World; *There is* (the *Philoſopher* could ſay) *no ſpectacle more worthy of God* (or grateful to him) *than a good man gallantly combating with ill fortune.* Not to be diſcompoſed or diſtempered in mind, not to fret or whine, when all things flow proſperouſly and according to our mind, is no great praiſe, no ſign of wiſdom, or argument of goodneſs; it cannot be reckoned an effect of ſound judgment, or vertuous affection, but a natural conſequent of ſuch a ſtate: But when there are evident occaſions, and urgent temptations to diſpleaſure, when preſent ſenſe and fancy do prompt and provoke to murmuring, then to be ſatisfied in our mind, then to keep our paſſions in order, then to maintain good humour, then to reſtrain our tongue from complaint, and to govern our demeanour ſweetly, this is indeed honourable and handſome; to ſee a worthy man ſuſtain croſſes, wants, diſgraces with equanimity and chearfulneſs is a moſt goodly ſight: ſuch a perſon to a judicious mind appeareth in a far more honourable and invidious ſtate, than any proſperous man: his vertue ſhining in the dark is far more bright and fair: *this* (as St. *Peter* ſaith, in a like caſe) *is thank-worthy, if a man for conſcience toward God ſuffereth grief*; if, in our caſe (we may ſay after him) a man out of conſciencious deference to God's Will, doth contentedly undergo adverſity, this God is ready to take for an obligation on himſelf, and will be diſpoſed in a manner to *thank him* (or to reward him) for it: This indeed amounteth to a demonſtration that ſuch a perſon is truly wiſe and really good: ſo is the ſatisfaction of a contented poor man more worthy: And it is no leſs more ſweet and comfortable, than that of any rich man, pleaſing himſelf in his enjoyments; contentedneſs ſatisfieth the mind of the one, abundance doth only ſatiate the appetites of the other; the former is immaterial and ſprightly, the complacence of a man; the latter is groſs and dull, like the ſenſuality of a beaſt; the delight of that ſinketh deep into the heart, the pleaſure of this doth only float in the outward ſenſes, or in the fancy; one is a poſitive comfort, the other but a negative indolency in regard to the mind: The poor good man's joy is wholly his own, and home-born, a lovely child of reaſon and vertue; the full rich man's pleaſure cometh from without, and is thruſt into him by impulſes of ſenſible objects.

Hence is the ſatisfaction of contented adverſity far more conſtant, ſolid and durable, than that of proſperity; it being the product of immutable reaſon abideth in the mind, and cannot eaſily be driven thence by any corporeal impreſſions, which immediately cannot touch the mind; whereas the other, iſſuing from ſenſe, is ſubject to all the changes, inducible from the reſtleſs commotions of outward cauſes affecting and altering ſenſe: whence the ſatisfaction proceeding from reaſon and vertue, the longer it ſtayeth the firmer and ſweeter it groweth, turning into habit, and working nature to an agreement with it; whereas uſually the joys of wealth and proſperity do ſoon degenerate into faſtidiouſneſs, and terminate in bitterneſs, being *honey in the mouth*, but ſoon becoming *gall in the bowels*. Nothing indeed can affect the mind with a truer pleaſure, than the very conſcience of diſcharging our duty toward God in bearing hard-

Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐν ἀληθείαις νόμοις εἰς δοκιμάσεως λόγον ἴσον· ἢ γὰρ βασιλεὺς θεῷ ἀγαθῶν, καὶ θεῷ στέφανον ἡ χορωνὶς αὕτη μᾶλλόν ἐστι Chryſ. *ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 16. *Vid. Epiſt.* 6. & *ad* Olymp. *Epiſt.* 3 (*p.* 75.) *de* Joſepho. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

Ecce par Deo dignum vir bonus cum mala fortuna compoſitus. Sen. *de Provid.*

1 Pet. 2. 19.

Honeſta res eſt læta paupertas. Epic.

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ διὰ τὸ θεὸν τι πάσχων μόνον δοκιμεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ἀδίκως τι πάσχων, καὶ φέρων γενναίως, καὶ δι' ἀρετῶν τῷ συγχωρήσαντι θεῷ ἐκ ἐλαττόων τὸ διὰ τὸ θεὸν ταῦτα τὰ πάσχοντός ἐστιν. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. 5'.

Apoc. 10. 10. Job 20. 20, 22.

ſhip, impoſed by his providence, willingly and well. We have therefore much reaſon not only to acquieſce in our ſtraits but to be glad of them, ſeeing they do yield us an opportunity of immediately obtaining goods, more excellent and more deſirable, than any proſperous or wealthy man can eaſily have, ſince they furniſh us with means of acquiring and exerciſing a vertue worth the moſt ample fortune; yea juſtly preferable to the beſt eſtate in the World; a vertue, which indeed doth not onely render any condition tolerable, but ſweetneth any thing, yea ſanctifieth all ſtates, and turneth all occurrences into bleſſings.

3. Even the ſenſible ſmart of adverſity is by contentedneſs ſomewhat tempered and eaſed; the ſtiller and quieter we lye under it, the leſs we feel its violence and pungency: It is tumbling and toſſing, that ſtirreth the ill humours, and driveth them to the parts moſt weak, and apt to be affected with them; the rubbing of our ſores is that which enflameth and exaſperateth them: Where the mind is calm, and the paſſions ſetled, the pain of any grievance is in compariſon leſs acute, leſs ſenſible.

4. Whence if others in our diſtreſs are uncharitable to us, refuſing the help they might, or ſhould afford toward the reſcuing us from it, or relieving us in it, we hereby may be charitable and great benefactours to our ſelves; we ſhould need no *anodyne* to be miniſtred from without, no ſuccour to come from any creature, if we would not be wanting to our ſelves, in hearkening to our own reaſon, and enjoying the conſolation which it affordeth. In not doing this, we are more uncharitable and cruel to our ſelves, than any ſpiteful enemy or treacherous friend can be; no man can ſo wrong or moleſt us, as we do our ſelves by admitting or foſtering diſcontent.

5. The contented bearing of our condition is alſo the moſt hopeful and ready means of bettering it, and of removing the preſſures we lie under.

It is partly ſo in a natural way, as diſpoſing us to embrace and employ the advantages which occur conducible thereto; for as diſcontent blindeth men ſo that they cannot deſcry the ways of eſcape from evil, it diſpiriteth and diſcourageth them from endeavouring to help themſelves, it depriveth them of many ſuccours and expedients, which occaſion would afford for their relief; ſo he that being undiſturbed in his ſpirit hath his eyes open and his courage up, and all his natural powers in order, will be always ready and able to do his beſt, to act vigorouſly, to ſnatch any opportunity, and employ any means toward the freeing himſelf from what appeareth grievous to him.

Upon a ſupernatural accompt content is yet more efficacious to the ſame purpoſe: For chearful ſubmiſſion to Gods Will doth pleaſe him much, doth ſtrongly move him to withdraw his afflicting hand, doth effectually induce him to advance us into a moſt comfortable ſtate: Of all vertues there is none more acceptable to God than patience. God will take it well at our hands if we do contentedly receive from his hand the worſt things: 'tis a monſtrous thing not to receive proſperity with grateful ſenſe, but it is heroical with the ſame mind to receive things unpleaſant: he that doth

Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 89. ſo ζημιῶται μὲν ὡς ἀνδρεῖος, στεφανῶται δὲ ὡς φιλόθεος, *he ſuffereth loſs as a man, but is crowned as a lover of God.* Beſides that it is an unreaſonable thing to think

Vid. Chryſ. *ad* Stag. 1. & 2. (*p.* 106.) of enjoying both reſt and pleaſure here, and the rewards hereafter; our conſolation here with *Dives*, and our refreſhment hereafter with *Lazarus*.

1 Pet. 5. 6. *Be humbled* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time* (ἐν καιρῷ when it is opportune and ſeaſonable) and

Jam. 4. 10. *Be humble* (ſaith St. *James*) *before the Lord, and he will exalt you*, and,

When

When (ſaith *Job*'s friends) *men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is lifting up, and he will ſave the humble perſon.* God with favourable pity hearkeneth to the groans of them who are *humbly contrite* under his hand, and reverently *tremble at his word*; he *reviveth the ſpirit of the humble*; *He is nigh to the broken of heart*, and *ſaveth ſuch as are of a contrite ſpirit*; *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; He proclaimeth *bleſſedneſs to the poor in ſpirit*, and *to thoſe that mourn*, becauſe they ſhall find comfort and mercy; all which declarations and promiſes are made concerning thoſe who bear adverſity with a ſubmiſs and contented mind; and we ſee them effectually performed in the caſes of *Ahab*, of the *Ninivites*, of *Nebuchadnezzar*, of *Manaſſes*, of *Hezekiah*, of *David*; of all perſons mentioned in *holy Scripture*, upon whom adverſities had ſuch kindly operations. But diſcontent and impatience do offend God, and provoke him to continue his judgments, yea to encreaſe the load of them: To be ſullen and ſtubborn is the ſure way to render our Condition worſe, and more intolerable: For, *who hath hardened himſelf againſt God and proſpered?* The *Pharaohs* and *Sauls*, and ſuch like perſons, who rather would break than bend, who being diſſatisfied with their Condition choſe rather to lay hold on other imaginary ſuccours, than to have recourſe to God's mercy and help; thoſe, who (like the refractory *Iſraelites*) have been *ſmitten in vain* as to any quiet ſubmiſſion or converſion unto God, what have they but plunged themſelves deeper into wretchedneſs?

Job 22. 29. (Luke 14. 11. 18. 14.) Iſa. 66. 2. 57. 15. Pſal. 34. 18. 51. 17. 147. 3. Matt. 5 3, 4. Job 9. 4. Jer. 2. 30. 5. 3. Iſa. 9. 13. 1. 5. 26. 10.

It is indeed to quell our haughty ſtomach, to check our froward humour, to curb our impetuous deſires, to calm our diſorderly paſſions, to ſuppreſs our fond admiration and eager affection toward theſe worldly things, in ſhort to work a contented mind in us, that God ever doth inflict any hardſhips on us, that he croſſeth us in our projects, that he detaineth us in any troubleſome ſtate; until this be atchieved, as it is not expedient that we ſhould be eaſed, as relief would really be no bleſſing to us; ſo God (except in anger and judgment) will no-wiſe grant or diſpenſe it; it would be a cruel mercy for him to do it: If therefore we do wiſh ever to be in a good caſe as to this World, let us learn to be contented in a bad one: Having got this diſpoſition firmly rooted in our hearts, we are qualified for deliverance and preferment; nor will God fail in that due ſeaſon to perform for us what he ſo often hath declared and promiſed; his nature diſpoſeth him, his word hath engaged him to help and comfort us.

Theſe are the moſt proper inducements unto contentedneſs, which conſidering (in the light of reaſon and holy *Scripture*) the nature of the thing, ſuggeſted unto my meditation: there are beſide ſome other means adviſable, (ſome general, ſome more particular) which are very conducible to the production of content, or removing diſcontent; which I ſhall touch, and then conclude.

1. A conſtant endeavour to live well, and to maintain a good conſcience. He that doeth this can hardly be diſmay'd or diſturbed with any occurrence here; this will yield a man ſo ample and firm a ſatisfaction of mind, as will bear down the ſenſe of any incumbent evils; this will beget ſuch hope in God, and ſo good aſſurance of his favour, as will ſupply the want of all other things, and fully ſatisfie us, that we have no cauſe to be troubled with any thing here: He that by conſcientious practice hath obtained ſuch a hope is prepared againſt all aſſaults of fortune with an undaunted mind and force impregnable; *He will* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *not be afraid of any evil tydings, for his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord.* Maintaining this will free us from all anxious care, transferring it upon God;

Pſal. 112. 1. 119. 6.

it will breed a ſure confidence, that he will ever be ready to ſupply us with all things convenient, to protect and deliver us from all things hurtful; enſuring to us the effect of that promiſe, by the conſcience of having performed the condition thereof: *Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God and its righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.*

Matt. 6. 33.

This was that which ſupported the *Apoſtles*, and kept them chearful under all that heavy load of diſtreſſes which lay upon them; *Our rejoicing is this* (could they ſay) *the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity——we have had our converſation in this world.*

1 Cor. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 16. Acts 23. 1. 24. 16.

'Tis the want of this beſt pleaſure, that both rendreth the abſence of all other pleaſures grievous, and their preſence inſipid: Had we a good conſcience we could not ſeem to want comfort; as we could not truly be unhappy, ſo we could hardly be diſcontent; without it no affluence of other things can ſuffice to content us. It is an evil conſcience that giveth an edge to all other evils, and enableth them ſorely to afflict us, which otherwiſe would but ſlightly touch us; we become thence uncapable of comfort, ſeeing not only things here upon earth to croſs us, but heaven to lowre upon us; finding no viſible ſuccour, and having no hope from the power inviſible; yea having reaſon to be diſcouraged with the fear of God's diſpleaſure. As he that hath a powerful enemy near, cannot abide in peace, without anxious ſuſpicion and fear; ſo he that is at variance with the Almighty, who is ever at hand, ready to croſs and puniſh him, what quiet of mind can he enjoy? *There is no peace to the wicked.*

2. The contemplation of our future ſtate is a ſovereign medicine to work contentedneſs, and to cure diſcontent: as diſcontent eaſily doth ſeiſe upon, and cleaveth faſt to Souls, which earneſtly do pore and dote upon theſe preſent things, which have in them nothing ſatisfactory or ſtable; ſo if we can raiſe our minds firmly to believe, ſeriouſly to conſider, and worthily to prize the future ſtate and its concernments, we can hardly ever be diſcontent in regard to theſe things. Conſidering heaven and its happineſs, how low and mean, how ſordid and vile, how unworthy of our care and our affection will theſe inferiour things appear? How very unconcerned ſhall we ſee our ſelves to be in them, and how eaſily thence ſhall we be content to want them? What, ſhall any of us be then ready to ſay, doth it concern me in what rank or garb I paſs my few days here? what conſiderable intereſt can I have in this uncertain and tranſitory ſtate? what is any loſs, any diſgrace, any croſs in this World to me, who am a Citizen of Heaven, who have a capacity and hope of the immenſe riches, the incorruptible glories, the perfect and endleſs joys of eternity? This was that which ſuſtained the holy *Apoſtles* in all their diſtreſſes; *For this cauſe* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we faint not——while we look not on the things which are ſeen, but on the things which are not ſeen, for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal*; and *I reckon* (ſaith he again) *that the ſufferings of this preſent life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.*

1 Theſſ. 4. 18. *Vid.* Naz. *Ep.* 201. (*ad* Theclam.) 2 Cor. 7. 31. 2 Cor. 4. 16. &c. 5. 7. Rom. 8. 18.

If likewiſe we do with faith and ſeriouſneſs conſider the diſmal ſtate below of thoſe, who are eternally ſecluded from all joy and bliſs, who are irrecoverably condemned to utter darkneſs, and the extremity of horrible pain, how tolerable, how pleaſant, how very happy will the meaneſt ſtate here appear to be? how vain a thing will it then ſeem to us to be to diſlike, or to be troubled with any worldly thing; to accompt any chance happening to us to be ſad, or diſaſtrous? What, ſhall we ſay then each of us, is this ſame loſs to the loſs of my Soul and all its comforts for ever? what is this want to the perpetual want of heavenly bliſs? what is this ſhort

and

and faint pain to the cruel pangs of endleſs remorſe, to the *weeping and gnaſhing of teeth in outward darkneſs, to everlaſting burnings?*

Thus infinitely ſilly and petty muſt all concernments of this life appear to him, who is poſſeſſed with the belief and conſideration of matters relating to the future ſtate; whence diſcontent in regard to them can hardly find acceſs to his mind.

3. Conſtant devotion is an excellent inſtrument and guard of content, an excellent remedy and fence againſt diſcontent.

It is ſuch in way of impetration, procuring the removal, or alleviation of our croſſes: For God hath promiſed that *he will give good things to thoſe that ask him*; *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth; he will fulfil the deſire of them that fear him; he alſo will hear their cry, and will ſave them. The poor man cryeth, and the Lord heareth him, and ſaveth him out of all his troubles*; the holy *Scripture* is full of ſuch declarations and promiſes aſſuring us of ſuccour from our diſtreſſes, upon our ſupplication to God; whence St. *Paul* thus adviſeth againſt all ſolicitude: *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer, and ſupplication with thankſgiving, let your requeſt be made known to God*: *And* (addeth ſignifying the conſequence of this practice) *the peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding, ſhall keep your hearts and minds through Jeſus Chriſt.*

Matt. 7. 11. Pſal. 145. 18. Jam. 4. 8. Pſal. 34. 6. 107. 6.

Phil. 4. 7. (Pſal. 25. 16. 86. 1. 4, 17. 44. 23.)

It likewiſe performeth the ſame by procuring grace and aid from God, which may enable and diſpoſe us to bear all evils well, which is really much better than a removal of them; for that hence they become wholſome and profitable to us, and cauſes of preſent good, and grounds of future reward; thus when St. *Paul beſought God* for deliverance from his thorn in the fleſh, the return to him was; *My grace is ſufficient for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs*: It was a greater favour to receive an improvement of ſpiritual ſtrength, occaſioned by that croſs, then to be quite freed from it.

2 Cor. 12. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Devotion alſo hath immediately of it ſelf a ſpecial efficacy to produce content. As in any diſtreſs it is a great conſolation, that we can have recourſe to a good Friend, that we may diſcharge our cares and our reſentments into his boſome; that we may demand advice from him, and, if need be, requeſt his ſuccour; ſo much more it muſt be a great comfort, that we can in our need approach to God, who is infinitely the moſt faithful, the moſt affectionate, the moſt ſufficient Friend that can be; always moſt ready, moſt willing, moſt able to direct and to relieve us: He deſires, and delights, that *in the day of our trouble we ſhould ſeek him*; that *we ſhould pour forth our hearts before him*, that we ſhould *caſt our burthens*, and *our cares upon him*, that we ſhould upon all occaſions implore his guidance and aid: And complying with his deſires as we ſhall aſſuredly find a ſucceſsful event of our devotions, ſo we ſhall immediately enjoy great comfort and pleaſure in them.

Pſal. 77. 2. 27. 8. 105. 4. 62. 8. 1 Sam. 1. 15. Pſal. 55. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Pſal. 5. 8. 27. 11. 31. 3. 43. 3. 139. 24. 143. 10. 61. 2. Jer. 31. 9.

The *God of all conſolation* doth eſpecially by this chanel convey his comfort into our hearts; his very preſence (that *preſence*, in which the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith *there is fulneſs of joy*) doth mightily warm and chear us; his Holy Spirit doth in our religious entercourſe with him inſinuate a lightſome ſerenity of mind, doth kindle ſweet and kindly affections, doth ſcatter the gloomy clouds of ſadneſs; practiſing it we ſhall be able to ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my ſoul.*

Pſal. 16. 11.

Pſal. 94. 19.

Humbly addreſſing our ſelves to God, and reverently converſing with him doth compoſe our minds, and charm our paſſions, doth ſweeten our

humour doth refresh and raise our spirits, and so doth immediately breed and nourish contentedness.

It also strengthneth our faith, and quickneth our hope in God, whereby
Isa. 26. 3. we are enabled to support our present evils, and peace of mind doth spring up within us.

Psal. 73. 26. 69. 16. 23. 4. 71. 20. It enflameth our love unto God, in sense of his gracious illapses, thence rendring us willing to endure any want or pain for his sake, or at his appointment.

It in fine doth minister a ravishing delight, abundantly able to supply the defect of any other pleasures, and to allay the smart of any pains whatever; rendring thereby the meanest estate more acceptable and pleasant, than any prosperity without it can be. So that if we be truly devout we can hardly be discontent: It is discosting from God by a neglect of devotion, or by a negligence therein, that doth expose us to the incursions of worldly regret and sorrow.

These are general Remedies and Duties both in this and all other regards necessary, the which yet we may be induced to perform in contemplation of this happy fruit (contentedness) arising from them. Farther,

4. It serveth toward production of contentedness to reflect much upon our imperfection, unworthiness and guilt; so as thereby to work in our hearts a lively sense of them, and a hearty sorrow for them; this will divert our sadness into its right channel, this will drown our lesser grief by the influx of a greater. It is the nature of a greater apprehension or pain incumbent to extinguish in a manner, and swallow up the sense of a lesser, although in it self grievous; as he that is under a fit of the stone doth scarce feel a pang of the gout; he that is assaulted by a wolf will not regard the biting of a flea. Whereas then of all evils and mischiefs moral evils are incomparably far the greatest, in nature the most ugly and abominable, in consequence the most hurtful and horrible; seeing (in St. *Chrysostome*'s language) *Excepting sin, there is nothing grievous or terrible among humane things; not poverty, not sickness, not disgrace, not that which seemeth the most extream of all evil, death it self; those being names only among such as philosophate, names of calamity, void of reality; but the real calamity this, to be at variance with God, and to do that which displeaseth him*; seeing evidently according to just estimation no evil beareth any proportion to the evil of Sin, if we have a due sense thereof, we can hardly be affected with any other accident: If we can keep our minds intent upon the heinous nature, and the lamentable consequences of Sin, all other evils cannot but seem exceedingly light and inconsiderable; we cannot but apprehend it a very silly and unhandsome thing to resent or regard them: What (shall we then judge) is poverty in comparison to the want of a good conscience? what is Sickness compared to distemper of mind, and decay of spiritual strength? what is any disappointment to the being defeated and overthrown by temptation? what any loss to the being deprived of God's love and favour? what any disgrace to the being out of esteem and respect with God? what any unfaithfulness or inconstancy of friends to having deserted or betrayed our own soul? what can any danger signify to that of eternal misery, incurred by offending God? what pressure can weigh against the load of guilt, or what pain equal that of stinging remorse? In fine, what condition can be so bad as that of a wretched Sinner? any case surely is tolerable, is desirable,

Οὐδὲν δεινὸν ἢ ἀνθρωπίνων, ἀλλ' ἢ ἁμαρτία μόνη· ἢ πενία, ἢ νόσος, ἢ χῦσεις ἢ ἐπήρεια, ἢ ἀτιμία, &c. Chrys. ἀνδρ. ϛ'. 6.

Vid. ad Olymp. *Ep.* 13. *ad* Theod. 1.

desirable, is lovely and sweet in comparison to this: Would to God, may a man in this case reasonably say, that I were poor and forelorn as any beggar; that I were covered all over with botches and blains as any *Lazar*; that I were bound to pass my days in an hospital or a dungeon; might I be chained to an oar, might I lye upon the rack, so I were clear and innocent: Such thoughts and affections if reflecting on our sinful doings and state do suggest and impress, what place can there be for resentment of other petty crosses?

Contrition also upon this score is productive of a certain sweetness and joy apt to quash or to allay all worldly grief: as *it worketh a salutary repentance not to be repented of*, so it therewith breedeth a satisfactory comfort, which doth ever attend repentance: He that is very sensible of his guilt, cannot but consequently much value the remedy thereof, mercy; and thence earnestly be moved to seek it; then in contemplation of divine goodness, and considering God's gracious promises, will be apt to conceive faith and hope, upon his imploring mercy, and resolution to amend; thence will spring up a chearful satisfaction, so possessing the heart, as to expel or to exclude other displeasures: A holy and a worldly sadness cannot well consist together.

2 Cor. 7. 10. *Vid.* Chrys. *ad* Demet. *& ad* Steletch. *Tom.* 6.

5. Another good instrument of contentedness is sedulous application of our minds to honest employment. Honest studies and cares divert our minds, and drive sad thoughts from them: They chear our spirits with wholesome food and pleasant entertainments; they yield good fruits, and a success accompanied with satisfaction, which will extinguish or temper discontent: While we are studious or active, discontent cannot easily creep in, and soon will be stifled.

Idleness is the great mother and the nurse of discontent; it layeth the mind open for melancholly conceits to enter; it yieldeth harbour to them, and entertainment there; it depriveth of all the remedies and allays which business affordeth.

Reciprocally discontent also begetteth idleness, and by it groweth: They are like ice and water, arising each out of the other: We should therefore not suffer any sadness so to encroach upon us, as to hinder us from attending to our business (the honest works and studies of our calling) for it thereby will grow stronger and more hardly vincible.

Mater me genuit.

6. A like expediment to remove discontent is good company. It not onely sometimes ministreth advices and arguments for content, but raiseth the drooping spirit, erecting it to a loving complaisance, drawing it out towards others in expressions of kindness, and yielding delight in those which we receive from others, infecting us by a kind of contagion with good humour, and instilling pleasant *Idea*'s into our fancy, agreeably diverting us from sad and irksome thoughts: Discontent affecteth retirement and solitude, as its element and food; good company partly starveth it by smothering sad thoughts, partly cureth it by exhilarating discourse. No man hardly can find displeasure, while friendly conversation entertaineth him; no man returneth from it without some refreshment and ease of mind.

Ἀγαθὴ γὰρ παρηγορία δεῖ ἑταίρου.

7. Having right and lowly conceits of our selves is a most sure guardian and procurer of content: For answerable to a man's judgment of himself are his resentments of the dealing he meeteth with from God or man. He that thinks meanly as he ought of himself, will not easily be offended at any thing; any thing, will he think, is good enough for me; I deserve nothing from God, I cannot deserve much of man; if I have any competence of provision for my life, any tolerable usage, any respect, it is more

more than my due, I am bound to be thankful: But he that conceiteth highly (that is vainly) of himſelf, nothing will ſatisfie him; nothing, thinks he, is good enough for him, or anſwerable to his deſerts; no body can yield him ſufficient reſpect; any ſmall neglect diſturbeth and enrageth him; he cannot endure that any man ſhould thwart his intereſt, ſhould croſs his humour, ſhould diſſent from his opinion; Hence ſeeing the world will not eaſily be induced to conceit of him as he doth of himſelf, nor to comply with his humours and pretences, it is impoſſible that he ſhould be content.

8. It conduceth to this purpoſe to contemplate and reſent the publick ſtate of things, the intereſt of the World, of our Country, of God's Church. The ſenſe of publick calamities will drown that of private, as unworthy to be conſidered or compared with them: The ſenſe of publick proſperity will allay that of particular misfortune. How (will a wiſe and good man ſay) can I deſire to proſper and flouriſh, while the State is in danger or diſtreſs? how can I grieve, ſeeing my Country is in good condition? is it juſt, is it handſome that I ſhould be a Non-conformiſt either in the publick ſorrow or joy? Indeed

9. All Hearty Charity doth greatly alleviate diſcontent. If we bear ſuch a good will to our Neighbour as to have a ſincere compaſſion of his evils, and complacence in his good, our caſe will not much afflict us. If we can appropriate and enjoy the proſperity, the wealth, the reputation, of our Neighbour, by delighting in them, what can we want; what can diſpleaſe us? If our heart be enlarged in pity for the misfortunes of others, it cannot be contracted with grief for our own: Our ſorrow, like water, being thus diffuſed, cannot be ſo deep but it will be more fruitful; it will produce ſuch effects as will comfort and pleaſe us; It is a ſtingy ſelfiſhneſs which maketh us ſo very ſenſible of croſſes, and ſo uncapable of comfort.

10. Again, if we will attain contentment, we muſt take heed of ſetting our affection upon any worldly thing whatever, ſo as very highly to prize it, very paſſionately to affect it, very eagerly to purſue it; ſo as to conceive our happineſs in any meaſure to hang on it, or ſtick thereto: If there be any ſuch thing, we ſhall be diſappointed in the acquiſt, or the retention of it; or we ſhall be diſſatisfied in its enjoyment.

So to adhere in affection to any thing is an adulterous diſloyalty toward our Maker and beſt Friend; from which it is expedient that we ſhould be reclaimed; whence God (in juſt anger, or in kind mercy) will be apt to croſs us in our attempts to get it, or to deprive us of its poſſeſſion; whence the diſpleaſure will follow, which always attendeth a ſeparation from things we love. But if we be ſuffered to obtain or to retain it, we ſhall ſoon find diſſatisfaction therein; being either diſguſted with ſome bitterneſs in it (ſuch as doth lurk in every ſenſible good) or being cloyed with its luſciouſneſs: it after a ſmall enjoyment will become either diſtaſtful or inſipid.

This, according to continual experience, is the nature of all things, pleaſant onely to ſenſe or fancy, preſently to ſatiate: No beauty can long pleaſe the eye, no melody the ear, no delicacy the palate, no curioſity the fancy; a little time doth waſt away, a ſmall uſe doth wear out the pleaſure, which at firſt they afford: Novelty commendeth and ingratiateth them; diſtance repreſenteth them fair and lovely; the want or abſence of them rendreth them deſirable; but the preſence of them dulleth their grace, the poſſeſſion of them deadneth the appetite to them.

New objects with a gentle and grateful touch warble upon the corporeal organs, or excite the ſpirits into a pleaſant friſk of motion; but when uſe hath

hath levigated the organs, and made the way ſo ſmooth and eaſie that the ſpirits paſs without any ſtop, thoſe objects are no longer felt, or very faintly; ſo that the pleaſure ceaſeth.

Onely thoſe things which reaſon (religious and ſound reaſon) doth approve, do yield a laſting (undecaying, unalterable) ſatisfaction; if we ſet our affections on them, we cannot fail of content: In ſeeking them we cannot be diſappointed, for God (without any reſervation or exception) hath promiſed to beſtow them upon thoſe who ſeriouſly and diligently ſeek them: nor can we be diſpoſſeſſed of them; God will not take them away, and they lie beyond the reach of any other hand: Having them then we cannot but fully and durably be ſatisfied in the fruition of them; the longer we have them, the more we ſhall like them; the more we taſt them, the better we ſhall reliſh them: time waſteth not, but improveth the ſenſe of their unfading beauty and indefectible ſweetneſs.

11. It is of great influence toward contentedneſs with an earneſt and impartial regard to contemplate things, as they are in themſelves, deveſted of tragical appearances, in which they are wrapt by our own inconſiderate fancy, or which vulgar prejudices do throw upon them: As all things, looked upon by the corporeal eye through a miſt, do ſeem bigger then in reality they are, ſo to the eye of our mind all things (both good and evil) ſeem hugely enlarged, when viewed through the foggs of our dusky imagination, or of popular conceit. If we will eſteem that very good, which with a gay appearance dazleth our imagination, or which the common admiration and applauſe of men recommendeth, the moſt vain and worthleſs, the moſt dangerous, the moſt miſchievous things often will appear ſuch; and if we pleaſe to accompt thoſe things greatly bad which look ugly or horridly to imagination, which are defamed by the injudicious part of men; or which men commonly do loath, do fret at, do wail for, we ſhall take the beſt, moſt innocent, moſt uſeful, moſt wholeſome things for ſuch, and accordingly theſe errours of our minds will be followed by a perverſe practice, productive of diſſatisfaction and diſpleaſure to us. No man ever will be ſatisfied, who values things according to the price which fancy ſetteth on them, or according to the rate they bear in the common market; who diſtinguiſheth not between good and famous, bad and infamous; who is affected accordingly with the want of thoſe things, which men call good, with the preſence of thoſe which they term bad.

But if we judge of things as God declareth, as impartial and cautious reaſon dictateth, as experience diligently obſerved (by their fruits and conſequences) diſcovereth them to be, we ſhall have little cauſe to be affected by the want, or preſence of any ſuch thing which is wont to produce diſcontent.

12. We ſhould to this purpoſe take eſpecial care to ſearch out through our condition, and pick thence the good that is therein, making the beſt we can of it, enjoying and improving it; but what is inconvenient or offenſive therein declining it, diminiſhing it, tempering it ſo well as we may, always forbearing to aggravate it. There are in nature divers ſimples, which have in them ſome part, or ſome juice very noxious, which being ſevered and caſt away, the reſt becometh wholeſome food; neither indeed is there any thing in nature ſo venomous, but that from it by art and induſtry may be extracted ſomewhat medicinal, and of good uſe, when duly applied, ſo in moſt apparent evils lieth incloſed much good, which if we carefully ſeparate (caſting away the intermixed droſs and refuſe)

refuſe) we ſhall find benefit, and taſt comfort thence; there is nothing ſo throughly bad, as being well ordered, and opportunely miniſtred will not do us much good: So if from poverty we caſt away or bear quietly that which a little pincheth the ſenſe, or grateth on the fancy, and enjoy the undiſtractedneſs of mind, the liberty, the leiſure, the health, the ſecurity from envy, obloquy, ſtrife, which it affordeth, how ſatisfactory may it become to us? The like conveniencies are in diſgrace, diſappointment, and other ſuch evils, which being improved may endear them to us: Even Sin it ſelf (the worſt of evils, the onely true evil) may yield great benefits to us; it may render us ſober and lowly in our own eyes, devout in imploring mercy, and thankful to God for it; merciful and charitable toward others in our opinions and cenſures; more laborious in our good practice, and watchful over our ſteps: And if this deadly poiſon well adminiſtred yieldeth effects ſo exceedingly beneficial and ſalutary, what may other harmleſs (though unhandſome, and unpleaſant) things do, being skilfully managed?

13. It is a moſt effectual means of procuring content, and curing diſcontent, to rowſe and fortify our faith in God, by, with moſt ſerious attention, reflecting upon the arguments and experiments, which aſſure us concerning God's particular providence over all, over us. It is really infidelity (in whole, or in part, no faith, or a ſmall and weak faith) which is at the root, as of all ſin, ſo particularly of diſcontent: For how is it poſſible, did we firmly believe, and with any meaſure of attention conſider that God taketh care of us, that he tendereth our good, that he is ready at hand to ſuccour us, (how then, I ſay, is it poſſible) that we ſhould fear any want, or grievouſly reſent any thing incident? But we like St. *Peter* are ὀλιγόπιστοι, of *little faith*, therefore we cannot *walk on the ſea*; but in deſpair ſink down: Sometimes our faith is buried in oblivion or careleſneſs; we forget, or mind not that there is a Providence; but look on things as if they fell out caſually or fatally; thence expect no redreſs from Heaven, ſo tumble into deſpair and diſconſolateneſs. Sometimes becauſe God doth not in our time and our way relieve us or gratifie us we ſlip into profane doubt, queſtioning in our hearts whether he doth indeed regard us, or whether any relief is to be expected from him; not conſidering, that onely God can tell when, and how it is beſt to proceed; that often it is not expedient our wiſhes ſhould be granted; that we are not wiſe enough, or juſt enough to appoint or chuſe for our ſelves; that it is impoſſible for God to gratify every man; that it would be a mad World, if God in his government thereof ſhould ſatisfie all our deſires.

We forget how often God hath ſuccoured us in our needs and ſtraits, how continually he hath provided for us; how patiently and mercifully he hath born with us, what miracles of bounty and mercy he hath performed in our behalf; we are like that diſtruſtful and inconſiderate people, who *remembred not the hand of God, nor the day when he delivered them*; *remembred not the multitude of his mercies*; but *ſoon forgat his works, and waited not for his counſel*; *They forgat God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things in the red Sea.*

Pſal. 78. 42.
Pſal. 106. 7, 13, 21.

From ſuch diſpoſitions in us our diſcontents do ſpring; and we cannot cure them, but by recollecting our ſelves from ſuch forgetfulneſs and negligence; by ſhaking off ſuch wicked doubts and diſtruſts; by fixing our hearts and hopes on him, who alone can help us; who is *our ſtrength, the ſtrength of our heart, of our life, of our ſalvation.*

Pſal. 22. 19. 46. 1. 81. 1. 59. 7. 144. 1. Pſal. 73. 26. 27. 1. 140. 7.

Of

Of him (to conclude) let us humbly implore, that he in mercy would beſtow upon us grace to ſubmit in all things to his Will, to acquieſce in all his diſpenſations, gladly to embrace and undergo whatever he allotteth to us; in every condition, and for all events befalling us heartily to adore, thank and bleſs him: Even ſo to the Ever-bleſſed God, our gracious maker and preſerver, be eternally rendred all glory, thankſgiving and praiſe. *Amen.*

SERMON X.

Of Patience.

1 PET. 2. 21.

Becauſe alſo Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps.

IN theſe Words two things appear eſpecially obſervable; a duty implied (the *duty* of *patience*) and a reaſon expreſſed, which enforceth the practice of that duty (the *example* of *Chriſt.*) We ſhall (uſing no more Preface, or circumſtance) firſt briefly, in way of explication and direction, touch the duty it ſelf, then more largely deſcribe, and urge the example.

The word *patience* hath, in common uſage, a double meaning, taken from the reſpect it hath unto two ſorts of objects, ſomewhat different. As it reſpecteth provocations to anger, and revenge by injuries, or diſcourteſies, it ſignifieth a diſpoſition of mind to bear them with charitable meekneſs; as it relateth to adverſities and croſſes diſpoſed to us by providence, it importeth a pious undergoing and ſuſtaining them. That both theſe kinds of patience may here be underſtood, we may, conſulting and conſidering the context, eaſily diſcern: that which immediately preceedeth, *If when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God*, relateth to good endurance of adverſity; that which preſently followeth, *who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he ſuffered he threatned not*, referreth to meek comporting with provocations: The Text therefore, as it looketh backward, doth recommend the patience of adverſities, as forward, the patience of contumelies. But ſeeing both theſe objects are reducible to one more general, comprizing both, that is, things ſeeming evil to us, or offenſive to our ſenſe, we may ſo explicate the duty of patience, as to include them both.

Patience then is that vertue, which qualifieth us to bear all conditions, and all events, by God's diſpoſal incident to us, with ſuch apprehenſions and perſwaſions of mind, ſuch diſpoſitions and affections of heart, ſuch external deportments, and practices of life as God requireth, and good

reaſon directeth. Its nature will, I conceive, be underſtood beſt by conſidering the chief acts which it produceth, and wherein eſpecially the practice thereof conſiſteth; the which briefly are theſe.

1. A thorough perſwaſion, that nothing befalleth us by fate, or by chance, or by the meer agency of inferiour cauſes, but that all proceedeth from the diſpenſation, or with the allowance of God, (that, *Affliction doth not come forth of the duſt, nor doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; but that all, both *good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the moſt high*) according as *David* reflected, when *Shimei* reviled him; *Let him* (ſaith the good King) *curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; and as *Job*, when he was ſpoiled of all his goods, acknowledged, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.*

Job 5. 6. Lam. 3. 38. 2 Sam. 16. 10. Job 1. 21.

2. A firm belief, that all occurrences (however adverſe, and croſs to our deſires) are well conſiſtent with the juſtice, wiſdom and goodneſs of God; ſo that we cannot reaſonably diſapprove, repine at, or complain of them; but are bound and ready to avow with the *Pſalmiſt*, that *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; to judge and ſay with *Hezekiah*, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken*; to confeſs with *David* unto him, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right*; *and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me.*

Pſal. 25. 10. 145. 17. 2Kings 20. 19. Pſal. 119. 75.

3. A full ſatisfaction of mind, that all (even the moſt bitter, and ſad accidents) do (according to God's purpoſe) tend, and conduce to our good; acknowledging the truth of thoſe divine Aphoriſms; *Happy is the man whom God correcteth*; *whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth. As many as I love I rebuke, and chaſten.*

Job 5. 17. Jam. 1. 12. Prov. 3. 12. Heb. 12. 5. Rev. 3. 19.

4. An entire ſubmiſſion, and reſignation of our wills to the will of God; ſuppreſſing all rebellious inſurrections, and grievous reſentments of heart againſt his providence; which may diſpoſe us heartily to ſay after our *Lord*, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord, Let him do what ſeemeth him good*; with *David*, *Here I am, let him do me as ſeemeth good to him*; yea even with *Socrates*, *If ſo it pleaſeth God, ſo let it be.*

Luke 22. 42. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 26.

Bearing adverſities calmly, chearfully and courageouſly; ſo as not to be diſcompoſed with anger, or grief; not to be put out of humour, not to be dejected or diſheartened; but in our diſpoſition of mind to reſemble the primitive Saints, who were ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved, but always rejoicing*; who *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, who *accompted it all joy when they fell into divers tribulations.*

2 Cor. 6. 10. Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2.

6. A hopeful confidence in God for the removal or eaſement of our afflictions, and for his gracious aid to ſupport them well; agreeable to thoſe good rules and precepts? *It is good that a man ſhould both hope, and wait quietly for the ſalvation of the Lord*; *Reſt in the Lord, and wait patiently for him*; *wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart*; according to the pattern of *David*, who, in ſuch a caſe, thus rouſed and ſtaid himſelf: *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him for the help of his countenance*; and after the holy *Apoſtles*, who in their moſt forlorn eſtate could ſay, *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed*; *we are perplexed, but not in deſpair*; *perſecuted, but not forſaken*; *caſt down, but not deſtroyed.*

Lam. 3. 26. Pſal. 37. 7. 27. 14. Pſal. 42. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 8.

7. A willingneſs to continue, during God's pleaſure, in our afflicted ſtate, without wearineſs, or irkſome longings for alteration; according to that advice of the *wiſe Man*, *My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtning of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apoſtle*, back'd with our Lord's

Prov. 3. 11.

Lord's example; *Considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be weary, and faint in our minds.* Heb. 12. 3.

8. A lowly frame of mind (that is, being sober in our conceits of our selves, sensible of our unworthiness, and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury and wretchedness; of our manifold defects and miscarriages in practice; being meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; being deeply affected with reverence and dread toward the awful majesty, mighty power, perfect justice and sanctity of God; all this) wrought by our adversity effectually, according to its design, quelling our haughty stomach, softning our hard hearts, mitigating our peevish humours; according to St. *Peter's* injunction, *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; and God's own approbation joined with a gracious promise, *To this man will I look; even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* 1 Pet. 5. 6. Ez. 66. 2.

9. Restraining our Tongues from all discontentful complaints, and murmurings, all profane, harsh, unsavoury expressions, importing displeasure, or dissatisfaction in God's dealing toward us, arguing desparation or distrust in him; such as were those of the impatient and incredulous *Israelites*; *They spake against God, and said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of whom the *Prophet* said —— *When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God*; such as they were guilty of, whom St. *Jude* calleth γογγυσὰς ϗ μεμψιμοίρους, *murmurers, and querulous persons* (or such as found fault with their lot) that which is stiled, *charging God foolishly*; for abstaining from which (notwithstanding the pressure of his most grievous calamities) *Job* is commended (where 'tis said, *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly*) that which the *Prophet* condemneth as unreasonable in that expostulation; *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* In such cases we should smother our passions in a still and silent demeanour, as the *Psalmist* advised, and as he practised himself: *I was dumb* (saith he) *and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doings.* Yea contrariwise patience requireth. Psal. 78. 19, 20. Isa. 8. 21. Jude 16. Job 1. 22. Lam. 3. 39. Psal. 37. 7. 46. 10. 4. 4. Psal. 39. 9.

10. Blessing and praising God (that is, declaring our hearty satisfaction in God's proceedings with us, acknowledging his wisdom, justice and goodness therein, expressing a grateful sense thereof, as wholsome and beneficial to us) in conformity to *Job*, who, upon the loss of all his comforts, did thus vent his mind: *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.* Job 1. 21.

11. Abstaining from all irregular and unworthy courses toward the removal, or redress of our crosses; chusing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve or relaxe our selves; contentedly wearing, rather than violently *breaking our yoke*, or *bursting our bonds*; rather continuing poor, than striving to enrich our selves by fraud or rapine; rather lying under contempt, than by sinful or fordid compliances attempting to gain the favour and respect of men; rather embracing the meanest condition, than labouring by any turbulent, unjust, or uncharitable practices to amplifie our estate; rather enduring any inconvenience, or distress, than *setting our faces toward Egypt*, or having recourse to any succour which God disalloweth; according to what is replied in that reprehension of St. *Paul, Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to Law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded?* and in that advice of St. *Peter*; *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit* Jer. 5. 5. Jer. 42. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 19.

mit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator.

12. A fair behaviour toward the inſtruments and abettors of our affliction; thoſe who brought us into it, or who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, or ſparing to yield the ſuccour which we might expect; the forbearing to expreſs any wrath or diſpleaſure, to exerciſe any revenge, to retain any grudge, or enmity toward them; but rather even upon that ſcore bearing good-will, and ſhewing kindneſs unto them; unto them, not onely as to our brethren, whom according to the general law of charity we are bound to love, but as to the Servants of God in this particular caſe, or as to the inſtruments of his pleaſure toward us, conſidering that by maligning or miſchiefing them, we do ſignifie ill reſentment of God's dealings with us, and in effect through their ſides, do wound his Providence: Thus did the *pious King* demean himſelf, when he was bitterly
2 Sam. 16. 7. reproached, and curſed by *Shimei*; not ſuffering (upon this accompt) any harm or requital to be offered to him; thus did the holy *Apoſtles*, who
1 Cor. 4. 12. *being reviled did bleſs, being perſecuted did bear it, being defamed did intreat*; thus did our *Lord* deport himſelf toward his ſpiteful adverſaries, who *being*
1 Pet. 2. 23. 3. 9. *reviled did not revile again; when he ſuffered did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteouſly.*

13. Particularly in regard to thoſe, who by injurious and offenſive uſage, do provoke us; patience importeth,

1. That we be not haſtily, over-eaſily, not immoderately, not pertinaciouſly incenſed with anger toward them; according to thoſe divine Precepts, and Aphoriſms; *Be ſlow to wrath*; *Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to*
Jam. 1. 19. Eccleſ. 7. 9. Prov. 16. 32. 14, 17, 29. Rom. 12. 19. Eph. 4. 31, 26. Coloſſ. 3. 8. *be angry; for anger reſteth in the boſom of fools. Give place to wrath* (that is, remove it.) *Let all bitterneſs, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-ſpeaking be put away from you, with all malice. Ceaſe from anger, let go diſpleaſure, fret not thy ſelf any-wiſe to do evil.*

2. That we do not in our hearts harbour any ill-will, or ill-wiſhes, or
Matt. 5. 21, 24. Pſal. 37. 8. ill-deſigns toward them, but that we truly deſire their good, and purpoſe to further it, as we ſhall have ability and occaſion; according to that Law
Levit. 19. 18. (even charged on the *Jews*) *Thou ſhalt not bear any grudge againſt the children of thy people; but thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*; and according
Matt. 5. 44. Luke 6. 27. to that noble command of our Saviour; *Love your enemies, pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you.*

3. That in effect we do not execute any revenge, or for requital do any miſchief to them, either in word or deed; but for their reproaches exchange bleſſings (or good words and wiſhes) for their outrages repay benefits and good turns; according to thoſe Evangelical Rules; *Do good to*
Matt. 5. 44, 39. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Theſſ. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9. Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 20. Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22. *them that hate you, Bleſs them that curſe you: Bleſs them that perſecute you, bleſs and curſe not: See that none render evil for evil: Be pitiful, be courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing: If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink: Say not I will do to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work: Say thou not I will recompenſe evil, but wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſave thee.*

14. In fine, Patience doth include and produce a general meekneſs and kindneſs of affection, together with an enlarged ſweetneſs, and pleaſantneſs in converſation and carriage toward all men; implying, that, how hard ſoever our caſe, how ſorry or ſad our condition is, we are not therefore angry with the World, becauſe we do not thrive, or flouriſh in it; that we are not diſſatisfied, or diſguſted with the proſperous eſtate of other men; that we are not become ſullen or froward toward any man, be-
Rom. 12. 15. cauſe his fortune excelleth ours; but that rather we do *rejoice with them that rejoice*; we do find complacence, and delight in their good ſucceſs,

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we borrow ſatisfaction and pleaſure from their enjoyments.

In theſe and the like acts, the practice of this vertue (a vertue, which all men, in this ſtate of inward weakneſs, and outward trouble, ſhall have much need and frequent occaſion to exereiſe) conſiſteth; unto which practice, even Philoſophy, natural reaſon, and common ſenſe do ſuggeſt many inducements; the tenour of our holy Faith and Religion do ſupply more and better; but nothing can more clearly direct, or more powerfully excite thereto, than that admirable example, by which our Text doth enforce it: Some principal of thoſe rational inducements we ſhall curſorily touch, then inſiſt upon this example.

It will generally induce us to bear patiently all things incident, if we conſider, That it is the natural right and prerogative of God to diſpoſe of all things, to aſſign our ſtation here, and allot our portion to us; whence it is a moſt wrongful inſolence in us, by complaining of our ſtate, to conteſt his right, or impeach his management thereof: That we are obliged to God's free bounty for numberleſs great benefits and favours; whence it is vile ingratitude to be diſpleaſed for the want of ſome leſſer inconveniences: That God having undertaken, and promiſed to ſupport and ſuccour us, it is a heinous affront to diſtruſt him, and conſequently to be diſſatisfied with our condition: That ſeeing God doth infinitely better underſtand what is good for us, than we can do; he is better affected toward us, and more truly loveth us than we do our ſelves; he with an unqueſtionable right hath an uncontroulable power to diſpoſe of us, it is moſt reaſonable to acquieſce in his choice of our ſtate: That ſince we have no claim to any good, or any pleaſure, and thence in with-holding any, no wrong is done to us, 'tis unjuſt and frivolous to murmur, or grumble; ſince we are, by nature, God's ſervants, it is fit the appointment of our rank, our garb, our diet, all our accommodations, and employments in his family, ſhould be left entirely to his diſcretion and pleaſure: That we being grievous Sinners, *leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*, meriting no good, but deſerving ſore puniſhment from him, it is juſt, that we ſhould be highly content and thankful for any thing on this ſide death and damnation: That our afflictions, being the natural fruits and reſults of our choice, or voluntary miſcarriages, it is reaſonable we ſhould blame our ſelves rather than pick quarrels with Providence for them. That our condition, be it what it will, cannot, being duly eſtimated, be extremely bad, or inſupportably grievous; for that as no condition here is perfectly and purely good (not deficient in ſome accommodations, not blended with ſome troubles) ſo there is none that hath not its conveniences and comforts; for that it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverſe behaviours, which create the miſchiefs adherent to any ſtate; for that alſo how forelorn ſoever our caſe is, we cannot fail, if we pleaſe, of a capacity to enjoy goods far more than countervailing all poſſible want of theſe goods, or preſence of theſe evils; we may have the uſe of our reaſon, a good conſcience, hope in God, aſſurance of God's love and favour, abundance of ſpiritual bleſſings here, and a certain title to eternal glory and bliſs hereafter; which if we can have, our condition cannot be deemed uncomfortable. That indeed our adverſity is a thing very good and wholſome, very profitable and deſirable, as a means of breeding, improving and exerciſing the beſt vertues, of preparing us for, and entitling us to the beſt rewards. That our ſtate cannot ever be deſperate, our adverſity probably may not be laſting (there being no connexion between the preſent and the future, viciſſitudes being frequent, all things depending on the arbitrary diſpenſation of God, who doth always pity us, and is

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apt to relieve us.) That however our affliction will not outlive our ſelves, and certainly muſt ſoon expire with our life. That this World is not a place of perfect convenience, or pure delight; we come not hither to do our will, or enjoy our pleaſure, we are not born to make laws, or pick our condition here; but that *trouble* is natural and proper to us (*We are born thereto, as the ſparks flie upwards.*) *No tribulation ſeiſeth us, but ſuch as is humane*; whence 'tis reaſonable that we contentedly bear the croſſes ſutable to our nature and ſtate. That no adverſity is in kind, or degree, peculiar to us, but if we ſurvey the conditions of other men (of our brethren every where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our caſe with theirs, we ſhall find, that we have many conſorts and aſſociates in adverſity, moſt as ill, many far worſe beſtead than our ſelves; whence it muſt be a great fondneſs and perverſeneſs to be diſpleaſed that we are not exempted from, but expoſed to bear a ſhare in the common troubles and burthens of mankind. That it hath particularly been the lot of the beſt men (perſons moſt excellent in vertue, and moſt deep in God's favour) to ſuſtain adverſity; and it therefore becometh us willingly and chearfully to accept it. That, in fine, patience it ſelf is the beſt remedy to eaſe us in, to reſcue us from adverſity, for it cannot much annoy us, if we bear it patiently, God will, in mercy, remove it, if we pleaſe him, by demeaning our ſelves well under it; but that impatience doth not at all conduce to our relief, doth indeed exaſperate, and augment our pain: Such conſiderations may induce us to a patience in general reſpecting all ſorts of evils.

Job 5. 7.

1 Cor. 10. 13.

There are alſo reaſons particularly diſpoſing to bear injuries and contumelies from men calmly and meekly, without immoderate wrath, rancorous hatred, or ſpiteful revenge toward them: Becauſe they do proceed from divine providence, diſpoſing or permitting them (for the trial of our patience, the abaſing our pride, the exerciſing of ſome other vertues, or for other good purpoſes) to fall upon us: Becauſe vindication of miſdemeanours committed againſt us doth not appertain to us; we not being competent Judges of them, nor rightful executors of the puniſhments due to them; God having reſerved to himſelf the right of deciſion, and power of execution: *Vengeance is mine, ſaith the Lord, I will repay it.* Becauſe we are obliged to interpret charitably the actions of our neighbour, ſuppoſing his miſcarriages to proceed from infirmity, from miſtake, or from ſome cauſe, which we ſhould be rather inclinable to excuſe, than to proſecute with hatred, or revenge. Becauſe indeed our neighbours moſt culpable offences, as iſſuing from diſtemper of mind, are more reaſonably the objects of compaſſion, and charity, than of anger, or ill-will. Becauſe we are bound to forgive all injuries by the command of God, and in conformity to his example, who paſſeth by innumerable moſt heinous offences committed againſt himſelf: *Gracious is the Lord, and full of compaſſion, ſlow to anger, and of great mercy; long-ſuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth*; ſo muſt we be alſo, if we will be like him, or pleaſe him. Becauſe we our ſelves, being ſubject to incur the ſame faults in kind, or greater in value, do need much pardon, and ſhould thence be ready to allow it unto others; both in equity, and in gratitude toward God; leſt that in the Goſpel be applied to us; *O thou wicked ſervant, I forgave thee all that debt, becauſe thou deſiredſt me; Shouldſt not thou alſo have had compaſſion upon thy fellow-ſervant, even as I had pity on thee?* Becauſe God hath made it a neceſſary condition of our obtaining mercy; promiſing us favour if we yield it, menacing us extremity, if we refuſe it: *If ye forgive men their treſpaſſes, our heavenly father will alſo forgive you; But if ye forgive not*

Rom. 12. 19. Heb. 10. 30. Deut. 32. 35, 36. *Vid.* Tert. *de pat. cap.* 10.

Pſal. 145. 8. 86. 15.

Matt. 18. 32.

Matt. 6. 14. Ecclus 8. 2. Matt. 18. 35. Mark 11. 25.

nat men their treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive your treſpaſſes. Becauſe our neighbour ſuffering by our revenge in any manner (in his body, intereſt, or reputation) doth not any-wiſe profit us, or benefit our eſtate, but needleſly doth multiply and encreaſe the ſtock of miſchief in the World; yea commonly doth bring farther evil upon our ſelves, provoking him to go on in offending us, rendring him more implacably bent againſt us, engaging us conſequently deeper in ſtrife and trouble: Becauſe no wrong, no diſgrace, no prejudice we can receive from men is of much conſequence to us, if our mind be not diſorder'd, if we are free from thoſe bad paſſions, which really are the worſt evils that can befal us. Becauſe, in fine, impatience it ſelf is inſignificant, and ineffectual to any good purpoſe; or rather produceth ill effects: It doth not cure our wound, or aſſwage our grief; it removeth no inconvenience, nor repaireth any damage we have received; but rather enflameth our diſtemper, and aggravateth our pain; more really indeed moleſting and hurting us, than the injury or diſcourteſie which cauſeth it: Thus briefly doth reaſon dictate to us the practice of all patience.

Idcirco quis te lædit ut doleas, quia fructus lædentis in dolore læſi eſt. Tert. *de pat.* 8.

Si patientiæ incubabo, non dolebo; ſi non dolebo, ulciſci non deſiderabo. Ib. 10.

But the example propoſed by the *Apoſtle* here, and otherwhere by St. Paul (*Let the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus*——) by the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* (*Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, Looking unto Jeſus the authour and finiſher of our faith*——) by our Lord himſelf (*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*) that doth in a more lively manner expreſs how in ſuch caſes we ſhould deport our ſelves, and moſt ſtrongly engageth us to comply with duties of this nature. Let us now therefore deſcribe it, and recommend it to your conſideration.

Phil. 2. 5. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Matt. 11. 22.

The example of our Lord was indeed in this kind the moſt remarkable that ever was preſented, the moſt perfect that can be imagined: He was, above all expreſſion, *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*; he did undertake, as to perform the beſt works, ſo to endure the worſt accidents, to which humane nature is ſubject; his whole life being no other than one continual exerciſe of patience, and meekneſs, in all the parts, and to the utmoſt degrees of them: If we trace the footſteps of his life, from the ſordid Manger to the bloudy Croſs, we ſhall not be able to obſerve any matter of complacence, ſcarce any of comfort (in reſpect to his natural or worldly ſtate) to have befallen him.

Vid. Tertull. *de Pat. c.* 3. Cypr. *de Pat. T.* 2. *p.* 315. Iſa. 53. 3.

His parentage was mean, to appearance, and his birth, in all exteriour circumſtances, deſpicable: *Is not this the Carpenter's Son?* were words of contempt and offence, upon all occaſions thrown upon him.

Matt. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3.

His life was ſpent not onely in continual labour, and reſtleſs travel, but in hard poverty, yea in extream penury, beneath the ſtate, not onely of the meaneſt Men, but of the moſt ſhifting Beaſts: *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

Matt. 8. 20.

For his neceſſary ſubſiſtence we find him often deſtitute of ordinary proviſion (as when he ſought food from the barren Fig-tree) often indebted for it to the courteſie, and (as it were) alms of the vileſt people, of *Publicans and Sinners*: ſo δι ἡμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν *he was* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *a beggar for us.*

Matt. 21. 18, 19. *Nullius menſam, tectumve deſpexit.* Tert. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

Yet may we never perceive him any-wiſe diſcontented with, or complaining of his condition; not diſcouraged, or depreſſed in ſpirit thereby, not ſolicitouſly endeavouring any correction or change thereof; but willingly embracing it, heartily acquieſcing therein; and, notwithſtanding all its inconveniences, chearfully diſcharging his duties, vigorouſly purſuing his main deſigns of procuring glory to God, and benefit to men:

Nor

Nor did he onely with content undergo the incommodities of a poor eſtate, but he was ſurrounded with continual dangers; the moſt powerful men of thoſe times (enraged with envy, ambition and avarice) deſperately maligning him; and being inceſſantly attentive upon all occaſi-
John 15. 18. ons to moleſt, hurt and deſtroy him: *The world* (as he ſaith himſelf, that is, all the powerful and formidable part of the World) *hating me*; Yet did not this any-wiſe diſmay, or diſtemper him, nor cauſe him either to repine at his condition, or decline his duty. He utterly diſregarded all their ſpiteful machinations, perſiſting immoveable in the proſecution of his pious and charitable undertakings, to the admiration of thoſe who
John 7. 25. obſerved his demeanour: *Is not this he* (ſaid they) *whom they ſeek to kill? but lo he ſpeaketh boldly.*

Luke 4. 30. Matt. 21. 27. 22. 18. He did indeed ſometimes opportunely ſhun their fury, and prudently did elude their ſnares, but never went violently to repel them, or to execute any revenge for them; improving the wonderful power he was endued with, altogether to the advantage of mankind, never to the bane or hurt of his malicious enemies.

Senſible enough he was of the cauſeleſs hatred they bare him; (ἐμίσησάν
John 15. 25. με δωρεάν, *They*, ſaid he, *have hated me for nothing*;) and of their extream ingratitude; yet never could he be provoked to reſent, or requite their dealing; ſee how mildly he did expoſtulate the caſe with them; *Then*
John 10. 31. (ſaith St. *John*) *the Jews took up ſtones to ſtone him: Jeſus anſwered them, Many good things have I ſhewed you from my Father, for which of thoſe do ye ſtone me?*

To be extremely hated, and inhumanely perſecuted without any fault committed, or juſt occaſion offered, is greatly incenſive of humane paſſion; but for the pureſt, and ſtrongeſt good-will, for the moſt unexpreſſible beneficence, to be recompenced with moſt virulent reproaches, moſt odious ſlanders, moſt outrageous miſuſages, How exceeding was that meekneſs, which without any ſignification of regret, or diſguſt, could endure it?

Matt. 23. 37. Out of moſt tender charity, and ardent deſire of their ſalvation, he inſtructed them, and inſtilled heavenly doctrine into their minds, what thanks, what reward did he receive for that great favour? to be reputed,
John 7. 12. Matt. 27. 63. and reported an Impoſtour: πλανᾷ τὸν ὄχλον, *he* (ſaid they) *doth impoſe upon the people.*

He took occaſion to impart the great bleſſing of pardon for Sin to ſome of them, confirming his authority of doing it by a miraculous work of goodneſs: How did they reſent ſuch an obligation? by accompting him
Matt. 9. 3, &c. a blaſphemer: *Behold* (ſaith St. *Matthew*) *certain of the Scribes ſaid within themſelves, this man blaſphemeth*: Which moſt harſh and uncharitable cenſure of theirs he did not fiercely reprehend, but calmly diſcuſſed, and refuted by a clear reaſoning; τί ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρὰ; *Wherefore conceive ye evil in your hearts; for whether is eaſier to ſay, thy ſins are forgiven thee, or to ſay, ariſe and walk?* that is, Is it not credible that he, who can perform the one, may diſpenſe the other?

Ingratos curavit, inſidiatoribus ceſſit. Tert.

He freed them from moſt grievous diſeaſes, yea reſcued them from the
Acts 10. 38. greateſt miſchief poſſible in nature, being poſſeſſed by the unclean Fiend; How did they entertain this mighty benefit, by moſt horrible calumny
Matt. 9. 34. 12. 24. accuſing him of Sorcery, or conſpiracy with the Devil himſelf? *The Phariſees ſaid, he caſteth out devils by the prince of the devils*: yea thence at-
Matt. 10. 25. tributing to him the very name and title of the grand Devil: *If they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more* (ſhall they defame) *them of his houſhold?* Yet this moſt injurious defamation he no otherwiſe
Matt. 12. 25. rebuked, than by a mild diſcourſe, ſtrongly confuting it; *Every Kingdom*

dom (said he) *divided against it self is brought to desolation* —— *and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his Kingdom stand?* that is, the Devil better understands his interest, than to assist any man in dispossessing himself.

He did constantly labour in reclaiming them from errour and sin, in converting them to God and goodness, in proposing fair overtures of grace and mercy to them, in shewing them by word and practice the sure way to happiness; What issue was there of all his care and pains? What but neglect, distrust, disappointment, rejection of himself, of what he said, and what he did? *Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* was a Prophesy, abundantly verified by their carriage toward him. John 12. 38.

These, and the like usages, which he perpetually did encounter, he constantly received without any passionate disturbance of mind, any bitter reflections upon that Generation, any revengeful enterprises against them; yea requited them with continued earnestness of hearty desires, and laborious endeavours for their good.

We might observe the ingrateful disrespects of his own Countreymen, and Kindred toward him, which he passeth over without any grievous disdain; rather excusing it, by noting that entertainment to have been no peculiar accident to himself, but usual to all of like employment; *No Prophet* (said he) *is acceptable in his own countrey.* Luke 4. 24. Matt. 13. 57.

We might also mention his patient suffering repulses from strangers; as when being refused admittance into a *Samaritane* Village, and his Disciples being incensed with that rude discourtesie, would have fire called down from Heaven to consume those Churls, he restrained their unadvised wrath, and thus expressed his admirable meekness; *The Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.* Luke 9.53,56.

Non illi saltem civitati quæ eum recipere noluerat iratus est, cum etiam discipuli tam contumelioso oppido cælestes ignes repræsentari voluissent. Tert.

We might likewise remark his meek comporting with the stupid and perverse incredulity of his Disciples, notwithstanding so many pregnant, and palpable inducements continually exhibited for confirmation of their faith; the which he no otherwise, than sometime gently, admonisheth them of, saying, τί δειλοί ἐστε ὀλιγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* ὀλιγόπιστε, τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?* * Luke 9. 41. Matt. 17. 17. *Non peccatores, non publicanos, aspernatus est.* Tert. Matt. 8. 26. ? 14. 31.

What should I insist on these, although very remarkable instances? since that one scene of his most grievous (shall I say, or glorious) passion doth represent unto us a perfect, and most lively image of the highest patience and meekness possible: of the greatest sorrow that ever was or could be, yet of a patience surmounting it; of the extreamest malice that ever was conceived, yet of a charity overswaying it; of injury most intolerable, yet of a meekness willingly and sweetly bearing it: There may we observe the greatest provocations from all hands to passionate animosity of spirit, and intemperate heat of speech, yet no discovery of the least disorderly, angry, or revengeful thought, the least rash, bitter or reproachful word, but all undergone with clearest serenity of mind, and sweetness of carriage toward all persons.

To *Judas*, who betrayed him, How doth he address himself? Doth he use such terms as the Man deserved, or as passion would have suggested, and reason would not have disallowed; Did he say, Thou most perfidious Villain, thou monster of iniquity and ingratitude; thou desperately wicked Wretch; Dost thou, prompted by thy base covetousness, treacherously attempt to ruine thy gracious Master, and best Friend; thy most benign and bountiful Saviour? No, instead of such proper language,

Matt. 26. 50. he uſed the moſt courteous and endearing terms: Ἑταῖρε, ἐφ' ᾧ πάρει; *Friend* (or companion) *for what doſt thou come*; Or what is thy buſineſs here? a tacite charitable warning there is to reflect upon his unworthy and wicked action, but nothing apparent of wrath, or reproach.

From his own diſciples and ſervants, who had beheld his many miraculous works, and were indebted to him for the greateſt favours, he reaſonably might have expected a moſt faithful adherence, and moſt diligent attendance on him in that juncture; yet he found them careleſs, and ſlothful: What then? How did he take it? Was he angry, did he upbraid, did he ſtorm at them? Did he threaten to diſcard them? No;

Matt. 26. 40, 45. he onely firſt gently admoniſheth them: *What, could ye not watch one hour with me?* then a little exciteth them, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*: He withal ſuggeſted an excuſe for their drowſineſs and dulneſs; *The Spirit is willing but the fleſh is weak*: in fine, he indulgeth to their weakneſs, letting them alone, ſaying, καθεύδετε λοιπὸν, *Sleep on now and take your reſt.*

Matt. 26. 31. When he foreſaw they would be offended at his (to appearance) diſaſtrous eſtate, and fearfully would deſert him, he yet expreſſed no indignation againſt them, or decreaſe of affection toward them upon that ſcore; but ſimply mentioneth it, as unconcerned in it, and not affected thereby.

And the unworthy Apoſtaſie of that Diſciple, whom he had eſpecially favoured and dignified, he onely did mildly forewarn him of, requiting it foreſeen by the promiſe of his own effectual prayers for his ſupport and recovery; and when St. *Peter* had committed that heinous fact, our good

Luke 22. 61, 62. Ἐπέβλεψε τῷ Πέτρῳ. Lord onely *looked on him* with an eye of charity and compaſſion; which more efficaciouſly ſtruck him, than the moſt dreadful threat; or ſharp reprehenſion could have done; *Peter* thereupon *went out, and wept bitterly.*

When the High-Prieſts officer, upon no reaſonable occaſion, did injuriouſly and ignominiouſly ſtrike him, he returned onely this mild expoſtu-

John 18. 23. Cypr. *Ep.* 65. lation: *If I have ſpoken evil, bear witneſs of the evil; if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* That is, I adviſe thee to proceed in a fair and legal way againſt me, not to deal thus boiſterouſly and wrongfully, to thy own harm.

Even careful and tender he was of thoſe, who were the inſtruments of his ſuffering; he protected them from harm, who conducted him to ex-

Luke 22. 51, &c. ecution; as we ſee in the caſe of the High-Prieſts ſervant, whom (with more zeal, than wherewith he ever regarded his own ſafety) he defended from the fury of his own friend, and cured of the wounds received in the way of perſecuting himſelf.

All his demeanour under that great Trial was perfectly calm, not the leaſt regret, or reluctancy of mind, the leaſt contradiction, or obloquy

Iſa. 53. 7. of ſpeech appearing therein; ſuch it was as became *the lamb of God*, who was to *take away the ſins of the world*, by a willing oblation of himſelf; ſuch

Iſa. 50. 6. as did exactly correſpond to the ancient Prophecies; *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth*; and, *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

Neither did the wrongful ſlanders deviſed and alledged againſt him by ſuborned witneſſes, nor the virulent invectives of the Prieſts, nor the barbarous clamours of the people, nor the contemptuous ſpitting upon him, and buffeting him, nor the cruel ſcourgings, nor the contumelious mockeries, nor all the bloudy tortures inflicted upon him, wring from him one ſyllable importing any diſſatisfaction in his caſe, any wrath conceived for his ſufferings, any grudge or ill-will in his mind toward his perſecu-

tors;

tors; but on the contrary, instead of hatred and revenge he declared the greatest kindness and charity toward them, praying heartily to God his Father for the pardon of their sins. Instead of aggravating their crime and injury against him, he did in a sort extenuate and excuse it, by consideration of their ignorance and mistake: *Lord*, (said he, in the height of his sufferings) *forgive them, for they know not what they do.* The life they so violently bereaved him of, he did willingly mean to lay down for the ransom of their lives; the bloud they spilt he wished to be a salutary Balsam for their wounds and maladies; he most chearfully did offer himself by their hands a sacrifice for their offences. No small part of his afflictions was a sense of their so grievously displeasing God, and pulling mischief on their own heads, a foresight of his kind intentions being frustrated by their obstinate incredulity and impenitence, a reflection upon that inevitable vengeance, which from the divine Justice would attend them; this foreseen did work in him a distastful sense, (more grievous than what his own pain could produce) and drew from him tears of Compassion (such as no resentment of his own case could extort) for, *When he was come near he beheld the City, and wept over it, saying, O that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace.* Luke 23. 34. Luke 19. 41. 13. 34.

If ever he did express any commotion of mind in reference to this matter, it was onely then when one of his friends, out of a blind fondness of affection did presume to dissuade him from undergoing these evils; then indeed being somewhat moved with indignation he said to St. *Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* Mat. 16. 23.

Neither was it out of a stupid insensibility or stubborn resolution that he did thus behave himself; for he had a most vigorous sense of all those grievances, and a strong (natural) aversation from undergoing them; as those dolorous Agonies wherewith he struggled; those deadly groans he uttered; those monstrous lumps of Bloud he swet out; those earnest Prayers he made to be freed from them, declare; but from a perfect submission to the Divine Will, and entire command over his Passions, an excessive Charity toward Mankind this patient and meek behaviour did spring: *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt; Let not my will, but thine be done. No man taketh away my life, but I lay it down of my own accord; I will give my flesh for the life of the world:* So doth our Lord himself express the true grounds of his passion and his patience. Mat. 26. 37, 38. Luke 22. 44. John 12. 27. Mat. 26. 39. Heb. 5. 7. John 18. 11. Mat. 26. 39. Luke 22. 42. John 10. 18. 6. 51.

Such is the Example of our Lord; the serious consideration whereof how can it otherwise than work patience and meekness in us; If he, that was *the Lord of Glory* (infinitely excellent in Dignity and Vertue) did so readily embrace, did so contentedly endure such extremities of penury, hardship, disgrace and pain, how can we refuse them or repine at them? Can we pretend to a better lot than he received, or presume that God must deal better with us than he did with his own dearest Son? Can we be displeased at a conformity to our Lord and Master? Can we without shame affect to live more splendidly, or to fare more deliciously than he chose to do? Shall we fret or wail, because our desires are crossed, our projects defeated, our interests any-wise prejudiced; when as his most earnest desires, and his most painful endeavours had so little of due and desired success: When he was ever ready, and had so constant occasion to say, *Let not my will be done*? Can we despise that state of meanness and sorrow which he from the highest sublimities of Glory and Beatitude

was pleaſed to ſtoop unto? Can we take our ſelves for the want of any
Luke 14. 27. preſent conveniences or comforts to be wretched, when as the fountain of
9. 23. all happineſs was deſtitute of all ſuch things, and ſcarce did ever taſte any
Mat. 10. 38. worldly pleaſure? Are we fit or *worthy to be his Diſciples*, if we will not
16. 24. *take up his Croſs and follow him*; if we will not go to his School (that School
Heb. 5. 8. wherein he is ſaid himſelf to have *learnt obedience*) if we will not con that
leſſon which he ſo loudly hath read out, and tranſcribe that Copy which
he ſo fairly hath ſet before us: Can we pretend to thoſe great benefits,
thoſe high priviledges, thoſe rich and excellent rewards, which he hath
Heb. 2. 9, 10. attained for us, and which he propoſeth to us, if we will not go on toward
Phil. 2. 9. them in that way of patience which he hath trod before us?

Heb. 12. 3. Can we alſo, if we *conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners*, be tranſported with any wrathful or revengeful paſſion, upon any
Quam gravis cauſa ſit hominis Chriſtiani ſervum pati nolle cum prior paſſus ſit Dominus, &c. provocation from our brethren? Can we hope, or wiſh for better uſage
from men than our Lord did ever find? Can we be much diſpleaſed with
any man for thwarting our deſires or intereſts, for diſſenting from our
conceits, for croſſing our humours, when as he (to whom all reſpect and
obſervance was due) did meet with ſo little regard or compliance in any
Cypr. *Ep.* 56. way; continually did encounter repulſes, diſappointments, oppoſitions
from the perverſe and ſpiteful world? Can we be very jealous of our
Credit, or furious when our imaginary honour (honour, that we never
really deſerved, or can juſtly claim, being guilty of ſo many great faults
and ſins) is touched with the leaſt diſgraceful reflection, if we do well ob-
ſerve and mind, that the moſt truly, and indeed onely honourable perſo-
nage (onely honourable, becauſe onely innocent perſon) that ever was
had his reputation aſperſed by the moſt odious reproaches, which deep-
eſt Envy and Malice could deviſe, without any grievous reſentment, or
being ſolicitous otherwiſe to aſſert or clear it than by a conſtant ſilence?
Can we be exaſperated by every petty affront, (real or ſuppoſed) when
the moſt noble, moſt courteous, moſt obliging perſon that ever breathed
upon earth was treacherouſly expoſed to violence by his own ſervant,
ſhamefully deſerted by his own moſt beloved friends, deſpitefully treated
by thoſe whom he never had offended, by thoſe upon whom he had heap-
ed the greateſt benefits, without expreſſing any anger or diſpleaſure a-
gainſt them, but yielding many ſignal teſtimonies of tendereſt pity and love
toward them? Can we ſee our Lord treated like a ſlave and a thief, with-
out any diſturbance or commotion of heart; and we vile wretches upon
every ſlight occaſion ſwell with fierce diſdain, pour forth reproachful lan-
guage, execute horrible miſchief upon our brethren? He indeed was ſur-
rounded with injuries and affronts; every ſin that ſince the foundation of
things hath been committed was an offence againſt him, and a burthen
Iſa. 53. 6. upon him; (*God laid upon him the iniquities of us all*) ſo many declared
enemies, ſo many Rebels, ſo many Perſecutors, ſo many Murtherers he
had as there have lived men in the World; for every ſinner did in truth
conſpire to his affliction and deſtruction; we all in effect did betray him,
did accuſe him, did mock, did ſcourge, did pierce and crucifie him; yet
Rom 5. 6, 8, 10 he forgave all offences, he died for all perſons; *while we were yet enemies, yet ſinners, he died for us*, to reſcue us from death and miſery: And ſhall we
not then in imitation of him, for his dear ſake, in gratitude, reſpect and
Rependamus illi patientiam, quam pro nobis ipſe dependit. obedience to him, be ready to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to for-
give any ſmall wrongs or offences from them; whatever they do to us, to
Ter. de pat. 16. love them, and do them what good we can? If ſo admirable a pattern of
patience and meekneſs ſo immenſe cannot, what is there that can oblige or
move us? I conclude with thoſe doxologies to our ſo patient and meek
Redeemer: *Worthy*

Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſ- Apoc. 5. 12, 13
dom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing. Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his blood, and hath Apoc. 1. 5.
made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XI.

Rejoyce evermore.

1 THESS. V. 16.

Rejoyce evermore.

Rejoyce evermore! O good Apoſtle, how acceptable Rules doſt thou preſcribe? O bleſſed God, how gracious Laws doſt thou impoſe? This is a Rule to which one would think all men ſhould be forward to conform: This is a Law, which it may ſeem ſtrange that any man ſhould find in his heart to diſobey: for what can any Soul deſire more than to be always on the merry pin, or to lead a life in continual alacrity? who readily would not embrace a Duty, the obſervance whereof is not onely pleaſant, but pleaſure it ſelf? Who is ſo wild as to affect a ſin, which hath nothing in it but diſeaſe and diſguſt?

That joy ſhould be injoyned, that ſadneſs ſhould be prohibited, may it not be a plauſible exception againſt ſuch a Precept, that it is ſuperfluous and needleſs, ſeeing all the endeavours of men do aim at nothing elſe, but to procure joy and eſchew ſorrow; ſeeing all men do conſpire in opinion with *Solomon*, that *a man hath nothing better under the ſun than——to be merry*? Were it not rather expedient to recommend ſober ſadneſs, or to repreſs the inclinations of men to effuſe mirth and jollity? Eccl. 8. 15. 2. 24. 3. 12, 22. 5. 18, 26.

So it may ſeem; but yet alas, if we conſult experience, or obſerve the World, we ſhall find this Precept very ill obeyed; for do we not commonly ſee People in heavy dumps; do we not often hear doleful complaints? is not this World apparently a ſtage of continual trouble, and grief? Did not the Preacher, upon a diligent ſurvey of *all the works done under the Sun*, truly proclaim, *Behold all is vanity and vexation of Spirit*? Eccl. 1. 14. Where, I pray, is any full or firm content; where is ſolid and durable joy to be found?

It is true that men, after a confuſed manner, are very eager in the queſt, and earneſt in the purſuit of joy; they rove through all the Foreſt of Creatures, and beat every buſh of Nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural endowments and improvements of Soul, or in the gifts of Fortune, or in the acquiſts of Induſtry; in Temporal Poſſeſſions, in ſenſual Enjoy-

Enjoyments, in ludicrous divertiſements and amuſements of Fancy; in gratification of their Appetites and Paſſions: They all hunt for it, though following a different ſcent, and running in various tracks, ſome in way of plodding for rare notions, ſome in compaſſing ambitious projects, ſome in amaſſing heaps of wealth, ſome in practice of over-reaching ſubtilties, ſome in wreeking their malice, their revenge, their envy; ſome in venting frothy conceits, bitter ſcoffs, or profane railleries; ſome in jovial converſation and quaffing the full bowls; ſome in muſick and dancing; ſome in gallantry and courting; ſome in all kinds of riotous exceſs, and wanton diſſoluteneſs; ſo each in his way doth inceſſantly prog for joy; But all much in vain, or without any conſiderable ſucceſs; finding at moſt inſtead of it ſome faint ſhadows, or tranſitory flaſhes of pleaſure; the which depending on cauſes very contingent and mutable, reſiding in a frail temper of fluid humours of body, conſiſting in ſlight touches upon the organs of ſenſe, in friſks of the corporeal ſpirits, or in fumes and vapours twitching the imagination, do ſoon flag and expire; their ſhort enjoyment being alſo tempered with regret, being eaſily daſhed by any croſs accident, ſoon declining into a nauſeous ſatiety, and in the end degenerating into gall and bitter remorſe; for *Even* (as *Solomon* obſerved) *in laughter, the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs*; and *Though* (as it is ſaid in *Job*) *wickedneſs is ſweet in the mouth——yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aſps within him*: So that indeed the uſual delights, which men affect are ſuch, that we ſhould not if we could, and we could not if we would conſtantly entertain them; ſuch *rejoicing evermore* being equally unreaſonable and impoſſible.

Prov. 14. 13.
Sunt quædam triſtes voluptates—Sen. *Ep.* 67.
Job 20. 12.——14. 20. 5.

Quaquaverſum ſe verterit anima hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi, præterquam in te. Aug. *Conf.* 4. 10.

Wherefore there is ground more than enough, that we ſhould be put to ſeek for a true, ſubſtantial, and conſiſtent joy; it being withal implied, that we ſhould affect it in another way, or look for it in another box, than commonly men do; who therefore are ſo generally diſappointed, becauſe they would have it upon impoſſible or undue terms; and leaſt expect it there, where it is onely to be had.

It is a ſcandalous miſpriſion, vulgarly admitted, concerning Religion, that it is altogether ſullen and ſour, requiring a dull, lumpiſh, moroſe kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour: Whereas on the contrary it alone is the never-failing ſource of true, pure, ſteady joy; ſuch as is deeply rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the reaſon of things, permanent like the immortal ſpirit wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects, whereon it is fixed; which is not apt to fade, or cloy; and is not ſubject to any impreſſions apt to corrupt, or impair it: Whereas in our Text, and in many Texts parallel to it, we ſee, that our Religion doth not onely allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be ſad for one Minute, baniſhing the leaſt fit of Melancholly, charging us in all times, upon all occaſions to be chearful; ſuppoſing conſequently that it is in ſome manner poſſible to be ſo, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the tranſcendent goodneſs of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our ſorrow to be our ſin, adapting his holy Will to our principal inſtinct; that he would have us to reſemble himſelf as in all other perfections, ſo in a conſtant ſtate of happineſs; that as he hath provided a glorious Heaven of bliſs for us hereafter, ſo he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradiſe of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our Religion in a tendency to

produce

produce joy in those who embrace it; for what is the Gospel, but (as the holy Angel, the first promulger of it, did report) *good tydings of great joy to all people*? How doth God represent himself therein, but as *the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation*, chearfully smiling in favour on us, graciously inviting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bountifully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy, of grace, of salvation to us? for what doth our Lord call us to him, but *that he may give us rest, and refreshment to our souls*; that he may *wipe away all tears from our eyes*; that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us *in a lasting hope*; that we may *enter into our Master's joy*; that *our joy may be full*, and such *as no man can take from us*? Luke 2. 10. Rom. 5. 33. 13. 5. Eph. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 3. 13. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 10. Jam. 5. 11. Matt. 11. 28. Apoc. 7. 17. 21. 4. Tit. 2. Matt. 25. 21. John 15. 11.

What is the great overture of the Gospel, but the gift of a most blessed *Comforter, to abide with us for ever*, chearing our hearts with his lightsome presence, and ravishing consolations? Wherein doth the Kingdom of Heaven consist? *not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*? What are the prime fruits sprouting from that root of Christian Life, the Divine Spirit? they are, as St. *Paul* telleth us, *Love, joy and peace*: Are there not numberless declarations importing a joyful satisfaction granted to the observers of God's Commandments; that *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*? Doth not our Lord pronounce a special beatitude to the Practiser of every vertue? And if we scan all the Doctrines, all the Institutions, all the Precepts, all the promises of Christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy, will not each yield great reason, and strong obligation to this duty of *rejoycing evermore*? 16. 22, 24. John 14. 16. Rom. 14. 17. Gal. 5. 22. Psal. 97. 11. 118. 15. 32. 11. 68. 3.

Wherefore a Christian, as such, (according to the design of his Religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates) is the most jocund, blith, and gay person in the World; always in humour, and full of chear; continually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed tenour of carriage: No black thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion should lodge in his breast; any furrow, any frown, any cloud doth sit ill upon his face; the least fretful word, or froward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him: If at any time it appear otherwise, 'tis a deflection from his character; 'tis a blemish and wrong to his profession; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment, or in his practice; He forgetteth that he is a Christian, or hath not preserved the innocence belonging to that Name. For, If a Christian remembreth what he is, or is sensible of his condition; if he reflecteth on the Dignity of his Person, the Nobleness of his Relations, the sublimity of his Priviledges, the greatness and certainty of his Hopes, how can he be out of humour? Is it not absurd for him that is at peace with Heaven, with his own Conscience, with all the World; for the possessor of the best goods, and the Heir of a blessed immortality; for the Friend, the Favourite, the Son of God, to fret or wail?

He that is settled in a most prosperous state, that is (if he pleaseth) secure of its continuance, that is well assured of its improvement; that hath whatever good he can wish in his reach, and more than he can conceive in sure reversion, what account can be given that he should be sad, or seem afflicted?

He that hath the unexhaustible spring of good for his portion, that hath his welfare entrusted in God's most faithful hand; that hath God's infallible word for his support; that hath free access to him, *in whose presence is fulness of joy*; that hath frequent tasts of God's goodness, in gracious dispensations of Providence, in entercourses of devotion, in the influences Psal. 16. 11.

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of grace; that hath the infinite beauty and excellency for the perpetual object of his contemplation and affection; that enjoyeth the ſerenity of a ſound mind, of a pure heart, of a quiet conſcience, of a ſure hope, what can he want to refreſh or comfort him?

If a true and perfect Chriſtian hath no care to diſtract him, having diſcharged all his concerns on God's Providence; If he hath no fear to diſmay him, being guarded by the Almighty protection from all danger and miſchief; If he hath no deſpair to ſink him, having a ſure refuge in the divine mercy and help; If he hath no ſuperſtitious terrours or ſcruples to perplex him, being conſcious of his own upright intentions to please God, and confident of God's merciful willingneſs to accept his ſincere endeavours; If he hath no incurable remorſe to torment him, the ſtings of guilt being pulled out by the merits of his Saviour, applied by his faith and repentance: If he hath no longing deſires to diſquiet him, being fully ſatisfied with that he doth poſſeſs, or may expect from God's bounty; all other things being far beneath his ambition, or coveting: If he hath no contentions to enflame him, knowing nought here worth paſſionately ſtriving for, and being reſolved to hold a friendly good-will toward all men; If he hath no repining envy, ſeeing that none can be more happy than he may be, and that every man's good by charity is made his own; If he hath no fretful diſcontent, ſince he gladly doth acquieſce in the condition, and ſucceſs allotted to him, reſigning his will to God's pleaſure, taking all for beſt which thence doth occur, being aſſured that *all things ſhall work together for his good* and advantage: If he hath no ſpiteful rancours to corrode his heart, no boiſterous paſſions to ruffle his mind, no inordinate appetites, perverſe humours, or corrupt deſigns to diſtemper his ſoul, and diſturb his life, whence then may ſorrow come, or how can ſadneſs creep into him?

Ἐπιθυμίας ἀπηλλάχθαι καὶ ἡδονῆς ἡ ψυχὴ καθαρὰ γίνεται. Juſt. Mart. *ad Græc. Paren.* 2.

What is there belonging to a Chriſtian, whence grief naturally can ſpring? from God, *our exceeding joy*, the Fountain of Happineſs; from Heaven the region of light and bliſs; from divine truth, which illuſtrateth and cheereth the ſoul; from God's Law, which *rejoiceth the heart*, and *is ſweeter than honey and the honey-comb*; from wiſdom, whoſe *ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all whoſe paths are peace*; from vertue, which cureth our afflictive diſtempers, and compoſeth our vexatious paſſions; from theſe things, I ſay, above which a Chriſtian as ſuch is onely converſant, no ſorrow can be derived; from thoſe ſweet ſources no bitter ſtreams can flow; But hell, the fleſh, the world, darkneſs, errour, folly, ſin and irreligion (things with which a Chriſtian ſhould have nothing to do, from which he ſhould keep a-looſ, which he doth pretend utterly to renounce and abandon) theſe, theſe alone, are the parents of diſcomfort and anguiſh.

Pſal. 43. 4.

Pſal. 19. 10. 119. 103. Prov. 3. 17.

Wherefore there is the ſame reaſon, the ſame obligation, the ſame poſſibility, that we ſhould rejoice evermore, as that we ſhould always be Chriſtians, exactly performing duty, and totally forbearing ſin; for innocence and indolency do ever go together, both together making Paradiſe; perfect vertue and conſtant alacrity are inſeparable companions, both conſtituting beatitude; And as although from our infirmity we cannot attain the higheſt pitch of vertue, yet we muſt aſpire thereto endeavouring to *perfect holineſs in the fear of God*; ſo though it may not be poſſible to get, yet it is reaſonable to ſeek perpetual joy; which doing in the right way we ſhall not fail of procuring a good meaſure of it.

2 Cor. 7. 1. Matt. 5. 48. 1 John 3. 3.

Indeed to exerciſe piety and to rejoice are the ſame things, or things

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so interwoven, that nothing can disjoin them; religious practice is like that river, *the streams whereof make glad the City of God, the holy place of the Tabernacle of the most High*, that is, every pious soul: No good deed can be performed without satisfaction; each vertue hath a peculiar delight annexed to it; whence the acts of joy, which upon various objects, grounds, and occasions, we may exert, being numberless, I shall onely touch a few principal instances. Psal. 46. 4.

1. We should evermore rejoice in the exercise of our faith; according to that prayer of our Apostle for the *Romans*, *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* Rom. 15. 13.

Every kind of faith (that which embraceth divine truths, that which applieth God's mercy, that which ensureth God's promises, that which confideth in God's providence, each of them) is a clear spring of joy, ever standing open to us; which he that drinketh, *shall never thirst.* Joh. 6. 35. 7. 38. 4. 14.

1. The faith, which embraceth God's heavenly truth, doth not onely enlighten our minds, but is apt to affect our hearts; there being no Article of Faith, or mystery of our religion, which doth not involve some great advantage, some notable favour, some happy occurrence dispensed to us by the goodness of God, the which Faith doth apprehend and convey to our spiritual gust, so that we cannot hardly *but receive the word with joy.* Matt. 13. 20. Phil. 1. 25. For is it not very sweet with Faith to contemplate the rich bounty of God in the Creation of the World, and producing so goodly a Frame, so copious a store of things, with a special regard to our sustenance and accommodation? Is it not satisfactory to believe that God by his Almighty hand and vigilant care, with the same benign regard doth uphold and govern the same? Is it not extreamly pleasant with faith to reflect on that great honour and happiness, which God did vouchsafe, to confer on mankind, by sending down from Heaven his onely Son to assume our nature, and to converse with men, that we might be advanced to a *participation of the divine nature*, and to an enjoyment of *communion with God?* How without great delight can we be perswaded, that our Saviour by his meritorious obedience and passion hath appeased God's wrath, and inclined his favour toward us, hath satisfied justice, hath expiated our offences, hath ransomed and rescued our souls from the dominion of Sin and Satan, from death and corruption, from Hell and everlasting torment; hath purchased immortal life, and endless bliss for us? What comfort is there in being assured by the resurrection, and triumph of our Lord over death, that our souls are indeed immortal, that our bodies shall be raised from the dust, that our persons are capable of an eternal subsistence in happiness? will it not much please us with an eye of faith to behold our Redeemer sitting in glorious exaltation at God's right hand, governing the World for the benefit of his Church, dispensing benediction and grace to us; interceding as our *merciful and faithful High priest* for the pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our prayers, the supply of our needs, and the relief of our distresses; If we be fully convinced, that our Lord Jesus is the Christ, our Lord, and Saviour, *the authour of eternal Salvation, to all that obey him*, how can we otherwise than follow those, of whom St. *Peter* saith, *Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though ye now see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:* So from the hearty belief of every Evangelical Truth we may suck consolation; each of them is food to our Soul; and to believe it is to eat it; which how can we do without a delicious, or most savoury relish? 2 Pet. 1. 4. 1 John 1. 3. 2 Cor. 4. 14. Heb. 2. 17. 1 John 2. 1. Heb. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 8. *Crede & manducasti.* Aug.

2. At least methinks that faith greatly should exhilarate us, which applieth those verities (so *worthy of all acceptation*) wherein God doth open 1 Tim. 1. 15.

his arms wide to embrace us, propoſing moſt kind invitations, and favourable overtures of mercy, upon the faireſt terms poſſible; together with effectual remedies for all the maladies and miſeries of our ſouls: for if we are ſenſible of our heinous Guilts, if we are laden with the heavy burthen of our ſins, if our heart is galled with ſore compunction for our miſdeeds; if we are ſtruck with the *terrours of the Lord*, and *tremble with the fear of Gods judgments*; how comfortable muſt it be to be perſwaded that God is fully reconcileable to us, is very deſirous to ſhew us mercy, and gladly will accept our repentance; that *we have an advocate with the Father*, who *hath propitiated for our ſins*, doth mediate for our peace, hath both full power and certain will, if we ſincerely do renounce our offences, wholly to remit them? ſo that *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*; and that *being juſtified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; Will not this belief revive us, and *make the broken bones to rejoyce*; will not the Goſpel of peace be hence in truth *a joyful ſound* to us? might it not hence well be proclaimed in the Prophet, *Comfort ye, Comfort ye my people; ſpeak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her; that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned.*

Pſ. 38. 1. 6. 1. 102. 4. 143. 4. 119. 120. 1 John 2. 1, 2. Rom. 8. 1. Rom. 5. 1. Pſal. 51. 8. 90. 8, 14. Iſa. 40. 1, 2.

And if we find our ſelves in habit of ſoul grievouſly diſtempered, labouring under great impotency and blindneſs, overborn and oppreſſed with the prevalency of corruption, peſtered with unreaſonable deſires and paſſions, unable to curb our inclinations and appetites, to reſiſt temptations, to diſcharge our duty in any tolerable meaſure, or with any eaſe; is it not then comfortable to believe, that we have a moſt faithful and skilful Phiſician at hand to cure our diſtempers; that we have a powerful ſuccour within ken, to relieve our infirmities; that God is ready to impart an abundant ſupply of grace, of light, of ſpiritual ſtrength to direct and aſſiſt us; that if any man doth lack *wiſdom*, he is encouraged *with faith to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*? if any man want ſtrength, God's Almighty Spirit is promiſed to thoſe, who with humble earneſtneſs do implore it; ſo that we may *be able to do all things* (incumbent on us) *by Chriſt who ſtrengtheneth us.*

Jam. 1. 5, 6. Luke 11. 13. Phil. 4. 13. Rom. 7. 25. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Ph. 2. 13.

3. And what more hearty ſatisfaction can we feel, than in a firm perſwaſion concerning the real accompliſhment of thoſe *exceedingly great and precious promiſes*, whereby we become capable of the moſt excellent priviledges, the moſt ample benefits, the moſt happy rewards, that can be? how can the belief that by God's infallible word, or as ſurely as truth it ſelf is true, an eternal inheritance of a treaſure that cannot fail, of a glory that cannot fade, of a kingdom that cannot be ſhaken, of a felicity ſurpaſſing all expreſſion and all conceit, is reſerved for us, in recompence of our faithful obedience; how, I ſay, can that be a dead, dull, dry belief, void of ſprightly comfort and pleaſure?

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Likewiſe the faith of confidence in God's good providence, and paternal care over us, (whatever our condition or circumſtances be) ſhould infuſe a chearful refreſhment of heart into us.

It is in holy Scripture moſt frequently aſſerted, that he who placeth his truſt in God, is a very bleſſed and happy Perſon; and can we without great ſatisfaction partake of that beatitude?

Can we by ſuch a truſt disburthen all our ſolicitous cares, all our anxious fears, all the troubles of our ſpirit, and preſſures of our condition upon God, with ſtrong aſſurance, that from his mighty power and watchful care, in due time, in the moſt expedient manner, we ſhall receive a competent ſupply of our wants, a riddance from our grievances, a protection from

from all danger and harm, a bleſſing upon all our good endeavours and undertakings, without feeling much eaſe and peace in our hearts?

What can be more chearing than a perſwaſion, that all our concerns are lodged in the hands of ſuch a Friend, ſo wiſe, ſo able, ſo faithful, ſo affectionate, ſo ever readily diſpoſed to help us, and further our good? They who truſt in God, are ſaid *to abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty,* Pſal. 91. 1. and *to be covered with his wings*; God is often ſtyled their rock, their for- Pſal. 61. 4. treſs, their ſhield and buckler, their defence and refuge; And are they 91. 4. 57. 1. not then impregnably ſafe? why then ſhould they fear any diſaſter? at 17. 8. 36. 7. what occurrence ſhould they be diſturbed? Have they not huge reaſon to 18. 2. 62. 2. Pſal. 112. 2. ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *In the ſhadow of thy wings will I rejoyce*; *The Lord* Pſal. 63. 7. *is my ſtrength and my ſhield, my heart truſteth in him, and I am helped*; *there-* Pſal. 28. 7. *fore my heart danceth for joy, and in my Song will I praiſe him*: May not (Pſal. 33. 21.) each of thoſe confiders in God well repreſs all inſurrections of trouble and grief, with that holy charm, *Why art thou ſo vexed, O my ſoul, and why* Pſal. 42. 14. *art thou ſo diſquieted within me, O truſt in God—for he is the health of my* 43. 5. *countenance, and my God.*

II. We ſhould evermore rejoice in the practice of Chriſtian hope, ma- king good that aphoriſm of *Solomon*, *The hope of the righteous ſhall be glad-* Prov. 10. 28. *neſs*; and obeying thoſe Apoſtolical injunctions, that we ſhould *rejoyce in hope*; that we ſhould *retain the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm to* Rom. 12. 12. *the end.* Thoſe excellent and moſt beneficial truths, thoſe ſweet propo- Heb. 3. 6. ſals of grace and mercy, thoſe rich promiſes, which faith doth apprehend as true in a general reference to all Chriſtians, hope doth appropriate, and apply as particularly touching our ſelves; improving the knowledge of our common capacity into a ſenſe of our ſpecial intereſt in them. God, ſaith our Faith, will aſſuredly receive all penitent Sinners to mercy, will crown all pious Chriſtians with glory, will faithfully perform whatever he hath graciouſly promiſed to all People, hath a tender care for all that love and fear him; But God, ſaith our hope, will have mercy on me, will *render to me the wages of righteouſneſs*, will *verify his good word to* 2 Tim. 4. 8. *his ſervant*, will protect, will deliver, will bleſs me in all exigencies: 1 Kings 8. 26. If ſo, being conſcious of our ſincere endeavour to ſerve and pleaſe God; if diſcerning, from a careful reflection upon our heart and ways, that in ſome good meaſure with fidelity and diligence we have diſcharged the conditions required of us, we can entitle our ſelves to God's ſpecial affe- ction, we can accommodate his word to our caſe, we can aſſume a pro- priety in his regard, how can we forbear conceiving joy?

All hope, in proportion to the worth of its object, and the ſolidity of its ground, is comfortable; it being *the anchor of the ſoul*, which ſtayeth Heb. 6. 19. and ſupporteth it in undiſturbed reſt; it appeaſing un- quiet deſires, it ſetting abſent goods before us, and an- ticipating future enjoyments by a ſweet foretaſt; See- ing then if we have a good Conſcience, and *our heart* 1 John 3. 31. *doth not condemn us*, our hope is grounded *on the rock of* Iſa. 26. 4. *ages* (on the immutable nature, and the infallible word of God) ſeeing it is the hope of the moſt worthy, the moſt ſublime, the moſt in- comparable and ineſtimable goods, it muſt be moſt extremely delightful.

Καὶ σὲ τῆ παρρησίᾳ χαίροντα παλιγγενεσίας αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχὴ τῆ ἐλπίδι γαυριῶσα διεγείνεται. Const. Ap. 7. 33.

If it much pleaſeth men to conceit themſelves next heirs of a fair eſtate, to have the reverſion of a good office, to be probable expectants of a great preferment (although death may intercept, or other accidents may obſtruct the accompliſhment of ſuch hopes) how much more ſhall that *lively hope* (of which St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *of an inheritance, incorruptible,* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5. *and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us*; *who are*

kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation, (which hope therefore can never be daſhed or defeated) breed a moſt chearful ſatisfaction, far tranſcending all other pleaſures, which ſpring from the moſt deſirable fruitions here; according to that admonition of our Lord, *Notwithſtanding* Luke 10. 20. *in this rejoice not that the ſpirits are ſubject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.*

III. We ſhould evermore rejoice in the performing the duty of Charity; both that which we owe to God, and that which is due to our Neighbour.

Love is the ſweeteſt and moſt delectable of all Paſſions; and when by the conduct of wiſdom it is directed in a rational way toward a worthy, congruous, attainable object, it cannot otherwiſe than fill the heart with raviſhing delight.

And ſuch (in all reſpects ſuperlatively ſuch) an object is God: He infinitely beyond all other things deſerveth our affection, as moſt perfectly amiable and deſireable, as having obliged us by innumerable and inеſtimable benefits, all the good that we have ever enjoyed, or that we can ever expect, being derived from his pure bounty; all things in the world in competition with him, being pitifully mean, ugly and loathſome; all things without him, being vain, unprofitable, and hurtful to us; ſo that Pſal. 89. 6. the *Pſalmiſt* might well ſay, *Who in Heaven can be compared unto the Lord?* Pſal. 73. 25. *who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I can deſire beſide thee.* Matt. 22. 38. He is the moſt proper object of our love; for we chiefly were framed, and it is the *prime law* of our nature to love him; our Soul from original inſtinct vergeth toward him as its centre, and can have no reſt till it be fixed on him; he alone can ſatisfie the vaſt capacity of our minds, and fill our boundleſs deſires.

He of all lovely things, moſt certainly and eaſily may be attained; for whereas commonly men are croſſed in their affection, and their love is embittered from their affecting things imaginary, which they cannot reach, or coy things, which diſdain and reject their affection; it is concerning God quite otherwiſe; for,

John 6. 37. Pſal. 70. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 20. John 14. 21, 23. Apoc. 3. 20. 1 John 4. 19. He is moſt ready to impart himſelf, and *will not reject any that cometh unto him*; He moſt earneſtly deſireth, and woeth our love; He is not only moſt willing to correſpond in affection, but doth prevent us therein; for *we love him,* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *becauſe he firſt loved us.*

He doth cheriſh and encourage our love by ſweeteſt influences, and moſt comfortable embraces, by kindeſt expreſſions of favour, by moſt Rom. 8. 28. 1 Cor. 2. 9. beneficial returns, ordering that *all things ſhall work together for good to thoſe who love him:* And whereas all other objects do in the enjoyment much fail our expectation, he doth ever far exceed it.

Wherefore in all affectionate motions of our hearts toward God, in deſiring him, or ſeeking his favour and friendſhip; in embracing him, or ſetting our eſteem, our good-will, our confidence on him; in enjoying him by devotional meditations, and addreſſes to him; in a reflective ſenſe 1 Cor. 6. 17. of our intereſt and propriety in him; in that myſterious union of ſpirit, Acts 11. 23. hereby we do cloſely adhere to him, and are (as it were) inſerted in him; Deut. 10. 20. John 15. 4, 6. in a hearty complacence in his benignity, a grateful reſentment of his kindneſs, and a zealous deſire of yeilding ſome requital for it, we cannot but feel very pleaſant tranſports, aſſuring to us the truth of that ſaying in Pſal. 5. 12. the *Pſalm, They that love thy name ſhall be joyful in thee*; and diſpoſing us to Pſal. 36. 7.— cry out with the *Pſalmiſt, How excellent is thy loving-kindneſs, O Lord, Be-* Pſal. 63. 3. *cauſe thy loving-kindneſs is better than life, my lips ſhall praiſe thee.*

Indeed

Indeed that celestial flame (kindled in our hearts by the spirit of love) cannot be void of warmth; we cannot fix our eyes upon infinite beauty, we cannot taste infinite sweetness, we cannot cleave to infinite felicity, without we should also perpetually rejoice in the first daughter of love to God, charity toward men; the which in complection and chearful disposition doth much resemble its mother: For it doth rid all those gloomy, keen, turbulent imaginations and passions, which cloud our mind, which fret our heart, which discompose the frame of our soul; (from burning anger, from storming contention, from gnawing envy, from rankling spite, from racking suspicion, from distracting ambition and avarice) It consequently doth settle our mind in an even temper, in a sedate humour, in an harmonious order, in that pleasant state of tranquillity, which naturally doth result from the voidance of irregular passions.

And who can enumerate or express the pleasures which do wait on every kind, on each act of Charity?

How triumphant a joy is there in any-wise doing good? whereby we feed good humour, and gratify our best inclinations, whereby we oblige our brethren and endear our selves to them, whereby we most resemble the divine goodness, and attract the divine favour?

St. *Paul* telleth us, that *God loveth the chearful giver*; and he prescribeth, that *he who sheweth mercy*, should do it ἐν ἱλαρότητι *with merriness*; And in the Law it is commanded, *Thine heart shall not grieve, when thou givest to thy poor brother*; And who indeed can out of charity give alms, or shew mercy, without chearfulness? seeing that he thereby doth satisfy his own mind, and doth ease his own bowels; considering that in doing good to his neighbour he receiveth far more good to himself; that he then doth put forth his stock to very great and most certain advantage; that he dischargeth an office very acceptable to God, doth much oblige him, and under him a debter, doth engage him abundantly to requite and reward that beneficence.

2 Cor. 9. 7. Rom. 12. 8. Deut. 15. 10. Eccluſ. 35. 10.

What satisfaction is there in forgiving offences; whereby we discharge our souls from vexatious inmates (black thoughts, and rancorous animosities;) whereby we clear our selves from the troubles attending feuds and strifes; whereby we imitate our most gracious Creatour, and transcribe the pattern of our meek Redeemer; whereby we render our selves capable of divine mercy, and acquire a good title to the pardon of our own sins: according to that divine word, *If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you.*

Matt. 11. 25. 25. 35.

How unconfinedly and inexhaustibly vast is that delight, which a charitable complacence in the good of our neighbour (*a rejoicing with those that rejoice*) may afford? a man thence engrossing all the good in the World, and appropriating to himself all the prosperous successes, all the pleasant entertainments, all the comfortable satisfactions of his neighbour. Even a charitable sympathy, or condolency, in the adversities of our neighbour, is not destitute of content; for the soul is thereby melted into a gentle temper, susceptive of the best impressions; we share in the comfort, which we minister to others; we are refreshed in that kindly submission to the good pleasure of God, in that lightsome contemplation of God's mercy, in those comfortable hopes of a happy issue, which we suggest to the afflicted; We thence are exposed to a grateful sense of God's goodness, in preserving our selves from those calamities, and in qualifying us to comfort our brethren; We feel satisfaction in reflecting upon this very practice, and observing that we do act conformably to good nature, to the dictates of reason, to the will of God, therein discharging a good conscience, and enjoying a portion of that *continual feast.*

Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 13. 6. Rom. 12. 15. 2 Cor. 1. 6. 7. 7. Συμπαρακλήσεως. Rom. 1. 12.

I

I ſhould, if the time would permit, farther declare how we ſhould find delight in the contemplation, of all God's Attributes, of his works, of his word; in thankful reſentment of all God's benefits; in willing obedience to all God's Laws; how joy is a proper fruit growing on the practice of humility, of juſtice, of temperance, of devotion, of every vertue and grace; More particularly I ſhould have evidenced how from a patient ſubmiſſion to God's afflicting hand, from penitential contrition of heart for our ſins, from a pious fear and ſolicitude in working out our ſalvation, moſt ſweet conſolations (ſo tempering thoſe ingredients, as to render their bitterneſs very ſavoury) may ſpring; But in recommending joy I would not produce grief; and therefore ſhall not farther annoy your patience.

SERMON XII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

BEFORE we do apply our ſelves to inculcate this Precept, it is requiſite that we ſhould ſomewhat explain the terms, and ſettle the meaning thereof; in doing that, we begin with the laſt Words, which qualify the action injoined as to its degree, or extent: *with all diligence*; the words (מִכָּל־מִשְׁמָר) anſwering to theſe in the *Hebrew*, do, according to the various uſe, or force of the particle מִן, admit a threefold acception. They may (1.) denote abſolutely the intenſeneſs in degree or extenſion in kind of the performance required in this Precept: πάσῃ φυλακῇ τήρει τὴν καρδίαν, *Omni cuſtodia ſerva cor tuum*; keep thy heart with all cuſtody, that is, with all ſorts, or with all degrees of care and diligence; ſo the LXX *Interpreters*, and the *Vulgar Latin* following them, render thoſe words. They may (2.) taking the particle for a *Mem excellentiæ*, as they call it, ſignify comparatively; *præ omni cuſtodia ſerva cor tuum*; keep thy heart above all keeping; that is, eſpecially and more than thou keepeſt any other thing; ſo doth *Pagnin* underſtand them, not without cauſe, both for the reaſon ſubjoined here, *becauſe from it are the iſſues of life*; that is, becauſe it is the principal part and fountain of all vital operations, and therefore deſerveth the beſt cuſtody; as alſo for that in what follows, and in other places of Scripture frequently we are injoyned to keep our tongues from bad diſcourſe, our eyes from wandring after bad objects, our feet from declining to bad courſes; and therefore probably in compariſon to theſe, although needful and inferiour

cuſtodies,

custodies, we are admonished to this most especially incumbent custody of our hearts. They may also (3.) and that probably enough be taken so as to denote the universality of the object or matter of this keeping, or the adequate term and bound thereof, keep thy heart, μετὰ πάσης φυλάγματος, *ab omni re custodienda*, from every thing which it should be kept from; that is, from every thing offensive or hurtful to it: So did *Aquila* and *Theodotion* translate the words. These senses are all of them good, and each may fairly pretend to find place in the meaning of the words; which of them with most likelihood I shall not discuss, meaning only to insist upon the substance of the precept; the nature of which being duly considered, will infer that it is to be observed according to the manner and measure prescribed, understood according to any of those senses, or according to all of them conjointly.

As for the meaning of the words, *Keep thy heart*; two enquiries may be made: 1. what the heart is, which *Solomon* adviseth us to keep; what to keep it doth import.

To the *first* I answer, that in the stile of Scripture the heart doth commonly import the whole inward man, the ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, *the man within us*, (as St. *Paul* speaketh) the ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος, *the hidden man of the heart* (as St. *Peter* calleth it) comprehending all the thoughts and imaginations, all the inclinations and dispositions; all the judgments and opinions, all the passions and affections; all the resolutions and purposes formed within us; in short, all interiour, whether tendencies to move, or actual motions of humane Soul. For the *Scripture* (by the way we may observe it) seemeth to favour that anciently most common and current opinion (embraced by *Aristotle* himself, even as true in strict Philosophy, although rejected by most of the latter Schools) that the heart, that material part and principal entrail of the Body, is the chief seat of the Soul, and immediate instrument of its noblest operations. However, because the heart in a man's breast is most inwardly seated, most secluded from sight, guarded from access, fenced from danger, thence whatever is inmost, most invisible, most inaccessible in any thing is called the heart thereof; and all a man's secret thoughts, inclinations, opinions, affections, designs are involved in this name; sometimes all, or divers of them conjunctly are called his heart, sometimes any one of them singly (as there is subject or occasion of using the word) is so termed: Instances in every kind are innumerably many, and very obvious; and therefore I shall not spend time in producing any, but shall suppose that here the word may be understood in its utmost extent, so as to comprehend all the particulars intimated; there being no apparent reason for preferring, or excluding any; all of them being capable of moral quality, both simply and immediately in themselves, and consequentially as they may be the principles of good or bad actions; and because all of them may be, need to be, ought to be the objects of the keeping here injoined. Rom. 7. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

But then what is this *keeping*? I answer, that the Word as applied to this matter is especially capable of three senses, each of which may be exemplified.

1. It may imply to observe, that is, to keep it under a constant view, as it were; to mark, or attend unto, to inquire into and study our heart. So, *My son* (saith the *wise Man*) *give me thy heart, and let thine eyes keep* (or observe) *my ways*; the same word which here, is there used both in the *Hebrew* and *Greek*, and can there well signifie no other custody, but that of attending unto; it being the office of the eye only to look, and observe. Likewise, *Observe* (saith God in the Law) *and hear all these* Prov. 23. 25. Deut. 12. 28.

words

words which I command thee; that is, hear them very attentively: And so in divers other places.

2. It may also denote the governance, or good management of our hearts; keeping all the motions thereof in due order, within fit compass; applying them to good, and restraining them from bad things: So the Psal. 39. 1. *Psalmist* useth the word, when he saith, *I will keep my mouth with a bridle*; that is, I will so rule and curb it, that no evil language shall issue from it: Eccles. 5. 1. So when the *wise Man* adviseth to *keep our foot when we go to the house of God*; by keeping it, he means rightly to guide and order our proceedings; or well to dispose our selves when we address our selves to religious performances: Prov. 27. 18. So again, *He* (saith he) *that keepeth the Fig-tree, shall eat the fruit thereof*; he that keepeth it, that is, he that dresseth and ordereth it to advantage for bearing fruit.

3. Again, keeping may be taken for preserving, guarding, securing from mischief or damage: which indeed is the most common use of the word; and therefore we need no instancing to countenance it.

Now any of these senses may be intended here, or all of them together; and they indeed are in the nature of the thing so coherent, or so mutually dependent one on the other, that any one of them can hardly be practised without the rest: For without heedfully observing our heart we cannot well govern it; and an ill-governed heart cannot easily be attended to; and without both watchful observation, and skilful management of it, we cannot guard it from evil; and reciprocally without guarding it, we cannot well rule it, or duly mind it: such a complication there is in practice of these three custodies.

I shall at present onely discourse concerning the first of them, which seems in the nature of things, and according to our method of acting to precede. According to this exposition, when 'tis said, *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, we may understand it, as if each of us were thus advised: With a most constant and wary care observe all the interiour propensions and motions of thy soul; whatever is done, or designed within thee; whither thy desires lean, what thy affections are stirred by, to what thy judgment of things doth lead thee, with greatest attention and assiduity mark and ponder it.

It is a peculiar excellency of humane nature, which seemeth more to distinguish a man from any inferiour rank of creatures, than bare reason it self, that he can reflect upon all that is done within him, can discern the tendencies of his soul, is acquainted with his own purposes; some shadows of other rational operations are discoverable in beasts, and 'tis not easie to convince them, who from plausible experiments do affirm them sometimes to syllogize; but no good reason or experience can (I suppose) make it probable, that they partake of this reflexive faculty; that they do ever regard, or remark upon their own imaginations; they seem always to march directly forward with a blind impetuousness toward some pleasing object, without attending to the fancy that guides them, or the appetite which excites them: neither indeed do they seem to need any such power in order to the preservation of their life, or gratifying of their sense, which are the main ends they were designed and fitted for. But man being designed by his Maker, disposed by the frame of his nature, and obliged by a Law imposed on him not to follow casual impulses from exteriour objects, nor the bare conduct of his imagination, nor the sway of his natural propensities, but to regulate as well the internal workings of his soul, as his external actions according to certain Laws or Rules prescribed him; to settle his thoughts upon due objects, to bend his inclinations

into

into a right frame, to conſtrain his affections within due bounds, to rectify his judgments of things, to ground his purpoſes upon honeſt reaſons, and direct them unto lawful matters; it is needful, that he ſhould have this power of diſcerning whatever moveth, or paſſeth within him; what he thinks upon, whither he inclines, how he judgeth, whence he is affected, wherefore he doth reſolve; without this power he could not be a moral agent, not able to perform any duty, not properly ſubject to any Law, not liable to render an accompt of his doings: Did he not perceive his own thoughts, how could he diſpel them, when they are bad, or vain? might he not obſerve his own inclinations, how could he ſtrive to reſtrain them, or to reform them, when they draw to unlawful practices? were he not ſenſible of his affections, how could he endeavour to reduce or compoſe them, when they become exorbitant or tumultuous? were he not conſcious of his own opinions, how could he weigh, and examine them; how could he conform his actions to them, or practice according to the dictates of his conſcience? 'tis therefore plainly needful that man ſhould be endued with this power, for that without it he can neither perform the duty required of him, nor enjoy the benefits he is capacified, and deſigned for: Our Maker therefore hath conferred it upon us, our duty conſiſts in its right uſe, our advantage ariſeth from the conſtant and careful exerciſe of this excellent faculty: Conſtant and careful, I ſay: *conſtant*, for obſervation implies ſo much; for, if ever we ſhut our eyes, or turn our heads aſide, what we look to may be gone; much therefore will paſs away undiſcerned and unobſerved by us; eſpecially ſuch quick and fleeting things as are the interiour motions of our ſoul will eſcape; wherefore a continual vigilancy is requiſite to a keeper of the heart; It muſt alſo be *careful*, as the keeper of a thing ſo nimble and ſlippery muſt not ſleep, ſo he muſt not ſlumber; he muſt not be oſcitant, but very intent upon his charge; ſuperficial glances upon the outward face, as it were, of the ſoul will not ſuffice; to *obſerve* is with earneſt care to look through the matter; to diſcern whatever lurketh therein, to pierce into the very depth and bottom of it, to ſpy through every nook and corner therein; otherwiſe 'tis but ſlightly viewed rather than truly obſerved; eſpecially ſo ſubtile, ſo intricate, ſo obſcure a thing as a man's heart is requireth an extraordinary application of mind in obſerving it with judgment and fruit.

This is then our duty, recommended by the Wiſe Man, to be continually with extream diligence, looking inward upon our ſelves, obſerving what thoughts ſpring up within us, what imaginations find moſt welcome harbour in our breaſts, what objects moſt affect us with delight, or diſpleaſure (what it is that we love and readily embrace; what we diſtaſt and preſently reject) what prejudices do poſſeſs our minds; wherefore we propoſe to our ſelves ſuch undertakings; converſing with our ſelves, and as it were diſcourſing in this manner: What is it that I think upon, are my thoughts ſerious, ſeaſonable, and pure? Whither do I propend; are my inclinations compliant to God's Law, and good reaſon? What judgments do I make of things; are my apprehenſions clear, ſolid, ſure, built upon no corrupt prejudice? What doth moſt eaſily ſtir me, and how is my heart moved; are my affections calm, and orderly, and well placed? What plots do I contrive, what projects am I driving on; are my deſigns good, are my intentions upright and ſincere? let me throughly enquire into theſe points, let me be fully ſatisfied in them; thus ſhould we continually be doing. The holy Scripture doth often bid us to judge our ſelves, to examine our works; to ſearch and try; to weigh, to heed, to watch over our ways: *If* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we would judge* (diſcern, or diſtinguiſh)

1 Cor. 11. 31. ſtinguiſh) *our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged*; that is, we ſhould avoid
Gal. 6. 4. thoſe miſcarriages, which bring the divine judgments upon us: and, *Let*
Ἐι ἑαυτὲς διακείνομεν.
Lam. 3. 40. *us* (ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*) *ſearch and try our ways, and turn unto the*
Pſal. 39. 1. *Lord*; and, *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*); and,
Prov. 4. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed*, is the *Wiſe Man's* advice: Search our ways, and ponder our paths, this implies, that we firſt do examine, and weigh our hearts; for there our ways begin; thence is motion derived to our feet, and to our hands alſo: All our actions depend as effects of them, all do receive their moral quality thence:
Mark 7. 23. Whatever in our doings is good or bad ἔσωθεν ἐκπορεύεται, doth (as our Lord expreſſeth it) iſſue from within us; our actions are but ſtreams ſweet or bitter, clear or foul, according to the tincture they receive at thoſe inward ſources of good or evil inclinations, of true or falſe judgments, of pure or corrupt intention; there conſequently we are principally obliged, to exerciſe the ſcrutiny and trial required of us.

Socrates is reported to have much admired that Verſe in *Homer*,

Ὅστις τοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακὸν ἀγαθόν τε τέτυκται.

Gell. *XIV.* 6. affirming that in it the ſum of all Wiſdom is comprized: the ſenſe and drift thereof being this, as he took it: Seek and ſtudy what good or bad is at home, within thy houſe; ſee how all goes in thy breaſt; employ thy chief inquiry upon the affairs of thy ſoul; there confining thy curioſity and care.

Such is the duty; and the practice thereof is of huge profit and uſe; bringing many great benefits and advantages with it; the neglect of it is attended with many grievous inconveniences and miſchiefs, and for perſwading to the one, diſſwading from the other, I ſhall propound ſome of them, ſuch as are moſt obvious, and offer themſelves to my meditation.

The moſt general, and moſt immediate advantage ariſing hence is this, that by ſuch a conſtant and careful inſpection, or ſtudy upon our hearts, we may arrive to a competent knowledge of, and a true acquaintance with our ſelves (a moſt uſeful knowledge, a moſt beneficial acquaintance)
Jer. 17. 9. neither of them being otherwiſe attainable. *The heart* (as you know the Prophet ſays) *is deceitful above all things*; and, *who* (adds he) *can know it*? who can know it: none it ſeems, but God that made it; and the man that hath it: he that hath it, muſt, I ſay, be able competently to know it; even in regard to him the queſtion may intimate ſome difficulty, but it doth not denote an abſolute impoſſibility: Hard it may be for us to know the heart by reaſon of its deceitfulneſs; but the ſlieſt impoſture, if narrowly looked into, may be detected: 'Tis a very ſubtle and abſtruſe, a very various and mutable thing; the multiplicity of objects it doth converſe with, the divers alterations it is ſubject to from bodily temper, cuſtom, company, example, other unaccomptable cauſes; eſpecially its proneneſs to comply with, and to ſute its judgments of things unto preſent circumſtances without, and preſent appetites within do render it ſuch; wherefore it is not indeed eaſie to know it; but yet poſſible it is; for under ſevere penalties we are obliged not to be deceived by it, or which is all one, not to ſuffer it to be deceived: *Let no man* (ſaith St.
1 Cor. 3. 18. *Paul*) *deceive himſelf: ſee that ye be not deceived*, ſaith our *Saviour*, *Take*
Luke 21. 8. *heed* (ſaith *Moſes*) *to your ſelves, that your heart be not deceived*; ſuch Pre-
Deut. 11. 16. cepts there are many, obliging us to know our hearts, and to diſcover the fallacies put on them, or upon us by them; carrying with them directions how to compaſs it; that is, by looking about us, and taking heed; (by careful circumſpection and caution.) It is therefore a feaſible thing to avoid being impoſed upon, and well to underſtand our ſelves: But as other

abſtruſe

abſtruſe pieces of knowledge, ſo this eſpecially cannot be attained without induſtrious applications of our mind, and conſtant obſervations, to find the corners wherein the deceit lurks; we muſt purſue its ſecret windings and intrigues; we muſt trace it ſtep by ſtep, (as Hunters do wild beaſts) into the utmoſt receſſes of its firſt deſires, and moſt deeply radicated prejudices; we muſt do as *David* did, when he ſtrove to free himſelf from diſtruſt and impatience in his ſtraits: *I communed with my own heart* (ſaith he) *and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch*; by which practice he found, as he farther acquaints us, that it was *his infirmity*, which moved him to doubt of God's mercy and benignity toward him. *Cicero* having ſomewhere commended Philoſophy as the moſt excellent gift by Heaven beſtowed upon man, aſſigns this reaſon; *becauſe it teaches us, as all other things, ſo eſpecially this of all moſt difficult thing, to know our ſelves*: but he, with his favour, doth ſeem to promiſe for his friend more than ſhe is able to perform; the main part of this knowledge doth lye beyond the reach of any particular method; the Empirick ſeems to have more to do here than the Doctor: Philoſophy may perhaps afford us ſome plauſible notions concerning the nature of our ſoul; its ſtate, its power, its manners of acting; it may preſcribe ſome wide directions about proceeding in the diſcovery of our ſelves; but the particular knowledge (and therein the chief difficulty lieth) of our ſelves, how our ſouls ſtand inclined and diſpoſed, that onely our particular earneſt ſtudy, and aſſiduous obſervation can yield unto us; and it is an ineſtimable advantage to obtain it. All men are very curious and inquiſitive after knowledge, the being endued therewith paſſeth for a goodly ornament, a rich poſſeſſion, a matter of great ſatisfaction, and much uſe: Men are commonly aſhamed of nothing ſo much as ignorance; but if any knowledge meriteth eſteem for its worth and uſefulneſs, this next to that concerning Almighty God, may ſurely beſt pretend thereto; if any ignorance deſerveth blame, this certainly is moſt liable thereto; to be ſtudious in contemplating natural effects, and the cauſes whence they proceed; to be verſed in the writings and ſtories of other mens doings; to be pragmatical obſervers of what is ſaid or done without us (that which perchance may little concern, little profit us to know) and in the mean while to be ſtrangers at home, to overlook what paſſeth in our own breaſts, to be ignorant of our moſt near and proper concernments, is a folly, if any, to be derided, or rather greatly to be pitied, as the ſource of many great inconveniences to us. For it is from ignorance of our ſelves that we miſtake our ſelves for other Perſons than we really are, and accordingly we behave our ſelves toward our ſelves with great indecency and injuſtice; we aſſume and attribute to our ſelves that which doth not any-wiſe belong unto us, or become us: As put caſe we are ignorant of the Perſons we converſe with, as to their quality, their merit, their humour; we ſhall be apt to miſcall, and miſtake them; to misbehave our ſelves in our demeanour toward them; to yield them more or leſs reſpect than befits them; to croſs them rudely, or unhandſomely to humour them: In like manner, if we be ſtrangers to our hearts, ſhall we carry our ſelves toward our own ſelves: We ſhall hence, like men in a frenzy, take our ſelves for extraordinary People, rich and noble, and mighty, when indeed our condition being duly eſtimated, we are wretchedly mean and beggarly. We do frequently hug our ſelves (or rather ſhadows in our room) admiring our ſelves for qualities not really being in us; applauding our ſelves for actions nothing worth; ſuch as proceed from ill principles, and aim at bad ends, when as did we turn our thoughts in-

Pſ. 77. 6, 10.

Hæc enim una nos cum cæteras res omnes, tum quod eſt difficillimum docuit, ut noſmet ipſos noſceremus. Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

Rev. 3. 17.

wards, and regard what we find in our hearts, by what inclinations we are moved, upon what grounds we proceed, we ſhould be aſhamed, and ſee cauſe rather to bemoan, than to bleſs our ſelves: Deſcending into our ſelves we might perchance diſcern that moſt of our gallant performances (ſuch as not conſidering our hearts we preſume them to be) are derived from ſelf-love, or pride; from deſire of honour, or love of gain; from fear of damage or diſcredit in the World, rather than out of love, reverence, and gratitude toward God, of charity, compaſſion, and good-will toward our brethren, of ſober regard to our own true welfare and happineſs; which are the onely commendable principles, and grounds of action: St. *Luke* telleth us of certain men, who *perſwaded themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others*; upon occaſion of whom our Saviour dictateth the Parable of the *Phariſee* and *Publican*; whence think we came that fond confidence in themſelves, and proud contempt of others? from ignorance ſurely of themſelves, or from not obſerving thoſe bad diſpoſitions, thoſe wrong opinions, thoſe corrupt fountains within, from whence their ſuppoſed righteous deeds did flow. *If any man* (ſaith St. *Paul*, giving an account of ſuch preſumptions) *thinks himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing,* ἑαυτὸν φρενατᾷ *he cheats himſelf in his mind*; *but let every man examine his work, and then he ſhall have rejoicing in himſelf alone* (or, privately with himſelf); ſome, he implieth, do impoſe upon, and delude themſelves, imagining themſelves ſome-bodies, (indued forſooth with admirable qualities, or to have atchieved very worthy deeds) when as, if they would enquire into themſelves, they ſhould find no ſuch matter; that themſelves were no ſuch Men, and their Works no ſuch Wonders: But if (ſaith he) a Man doth δοκιμάζειν ἑαυτῷ τὸ ἔργον, implore and examine what he doeth, and in reſult thereof doth clearly perceive, that he acteth upon good reaſons, and with honeſt intentions, then may he indeed injoy a ſolid interiour ſatisfaction (a true καύχημα, or exultation of mind) whatever others, not acquainted with thoſe inward ſprings of his motion, do pleaſe to judge of him, and his proceedings. No man indeed can truly value himſelf, or well approve of his own doings, ſo as to find any perfect comfort in himſelf, or in them, who doth not by ſtudying himſelf diſcover whence, and why he acts: One may be a flatterer, but cannot be a true friend to himſelf, who doth not throughly acquaint himſelf with his own inward ſtate; who doth not frequently conſult, and converſe with himſelf: A friend to himſelf, I ſaid, and to be ſo is one of the greateſt benefits that humane life can enjoy; that which will moſt ſweeten and ſolace our life to us: friendſhip with others (with perſons honeſt and intelligent) is a great accommodation, helping much to allay the troubles, and eaſe the burthens of life; but friendſhip with our ſelves is much more neceſſary to our well-being: for we have continual opportunities and obligations to converſe with our ſelves; we do ever need aſſiſtance, advice and comfort at home: and as commonly 'tis long acquaintance, and familiar entercourſe together, which doth conciliate one man to another, begetting mutual dearneſs and confidence, ſo it is toward ones ſelf: As no man can be a friend to a mere ſtranger, or to one whoſe temper, whoſe humour, whoſe deſigns he is ignorant of; ſo cannot he be a friend to himſelf, if he be unacquainted with his own diſpoſition and meaning; he cannot in ſuch a caſe rely upon his own advice

Ut nemo in ſeſe tentat deſcendere, nemo.

Luke 18. 7.

Ῥᾷον ἑαυτὸν ἀπαλᾶν, καὶ οἴεσθαι εἶναί τι δέον ὄντα, ἢ τὸ κενῆς δόξης φυσᾶσθαι. Nazianz. *Orat.* 27.

Gal. 6. 3.

Πρὸς ἑαυτὸν μόνον.

——*patriæ quis exul ſe quoque fugit?*

Αὐτὸς σαυτῷ χρῶ συμβούλῳ, καὶ πρὸ ἑνὸς. Naz. *Epiſt.* 60.

Ἔνιοι δὲ ἴδιον βίον ὡς ἀπειρίαστον δέημα φεύγειν οὐκ ἀναμένουσιν, οὐδ' ἀναπλάσαι τὸ λογισμὸν ὡς φῶς ἐφ' ἑαυτοὺς καὶ διαγαγεῖν· ἀλλ' ἡ ψυχὴ μόνωσιν κακῶν παντοδαπῶν, καὶ φείδησα, καὶ φόβωμόν τι ἔνδον, ἀκηδὲς δυσάζει, &c. Plut. *de Curioſ.* p. 916.

vice, or aid, when need is; but will ſuſpect, and diſtruſt himſelf; he cannot be pleaſant company to himſelf, but ſhall be ready to croſs, and fall out with himſelf; he cannot adminiſter conſolation to his own griefs and diſtreſſes; his privacy will become a deſertion, his retirement a mere ſolitude. But paſſing over this general advantage, I ſhall with ſome more minuteneſs of diſtinction conſider divers particular advantages accruing from the practice of this duty, together with the oppoſite inconveniences, which are conſequent upon the neglect thereof, in the following Diſcourſe.

SERMON XIII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

I Proceed to the particular advantages of the practice of this duty, and the inconveniences of the neglect of it.

1. The conſtant and careful obſervation of our hearts will ſerve to prevent immoderate ſelf-love, and ſelf-conceit; to render us ſober and modeſt in our opinions concerning, and in our affections toward our ſelves; qualifying us to comply with the Apoſtolical Precept, μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν, that is, not to overween, or overvalue our ſelves, and our own things: for he that by ſerious inſpection upon his own heart, ſhall diſcern how many fond, impure, and ugly thoughts do ſwarm within him; how averſe his inclinations are from good, and how prone to evil; how much his affections are miſplaced, and diſtempered (while he vehemently delights in the poſſeſſion, and impotently frets for the want of trifles, having ſmall content in the fruition, and but ſlender diſpleaſure for the abſence of the greateſt goods; while empty hopes exalt him, and idle fears deject him; while other various paſſions, like ſo many tempeſts, drive, and toſs him all about) who ſhall obſerve, how clouds of darkneſs, errour and doubt do hover upon the face of his ſoul; ſo that he quickly taketh up opinions, and ſoon layeth them down, and often turneth from one miſtake unto another; how unſettled his reſolutions are, eſpecially in the purſuance of the beſt goods; and what corrupt mixtures cleave to his beſt purpoſes; who taketh notice how backward he is unto, and how cold in devotions toward God, how little ſenſible of his goodneſs, or fearful of his diſpleaſure, or zealous for his honour, or careful of performing his duty toward him; how little alſo it is that he deſireth, or delighteth in the good, that he pitieth and grieveth at the evil of his neighbour; how ſluggiſh alſo and remiſs he is in the purſuance of his own beſt affairs, and

higheſt

higheſt concernments; he that doth, I ſay, frequently with heedfulneſs regard theſe imperfections and obliquities in his own heart, how can he be raviſhed with ſelf-love? how can he be much taken with himſelf? can any man dote upon ſuch deformity, admire ſuch weakneſs and naughtineſs? No ſurely; that men are ſo amorous of themſelves, ſo haughty and arrogant in their conceits, doth conſtantly ariſe from not reflecting on their own hearts; not beholding themſelves wiſtly enough in that mirrour; not conſidering according to juſt repreſentation there how little lovely, or worthy they are: If they did practice that, they would ſee reaſon, and thence become inclinable rather to deſpiſe, to loath, to pity themſelves.

2. Upon that advantage is conſequent, that this practice will diſpoſe us with equanimity, and patience to bear all croſſes and grievances befalling us; ſo producing not onely an excellent vertue, but a conſiderable ſolace to us; for the being conſcious of ſo much unworthineſs, which obſervation of our heart will neceſſarily diſcover, will not onely juſtify the providence, (ſo removing all juſt cauſe of complaint) but will commend the benignity of God unto us (ſo adminiſtring good matter of thanks.) It will prompt us heartily to confeſs with thoſe in *Ezra*, that *our puniſhments are leſs than our deſervings*; to join in acknowledgment with the *Pſalmiſt*, that *God hath not dealt with us after our ſins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*; to ſay with *Jeremy*, *It is of the Lord's mercy, that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not*; with *Jacob*, *I am leſs than any of thy mercies.*

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum eſt. Ovid. *Ep.* 5.

Ezra 9. 13.

Pſal. 103. 10.

Iam. 3. 22.

Gen. 32. 10.

3. Particularly this Practice will fence us againſt immoderate diſpleaſure occaſionable by Mens hard opinions, or raſh cenſures paſſed on us: For he that by inquiry into himſelf perceives ſo many defects in himſelf, will not ſo eaſily, nor ſo greatly be offended, if ſome of them (or ſome like to them) be objected to him; ſince he finds himſelf truly liable to many more, and greater. *Epictetus*, his advice is, when you are told, that any Man ſpeaks ill of you, that you ſhould not apologize, but anſwer onely, that he was ignorant of many other faults of yours, or he would not onely have mentioned thoſe: To be diſpoſed without diſſembling, or affection to follow his counſel would argue a man very intelligent of himſelf, and well prepared to endure happily and handſomely encounters of this kind, which every man ſhall be ſure to meet with. None indeed can ſo contentedly brook reproach, or blame, as he that by intimate acquaintance with his own heart doth know the cenſure paſſed on him to be in effect mild and favourable; as finding himſelf a witneſs of more faults, than any adverſary can accuſe him of; as being a ſtricter examiner, and ſeverer judge of himſelf than the moſt envious eye, or diſaffected mind can be. It is alſo ſome comfort, that if cenſures be very outragious, a Man by knowledge of himſelf (by knowing his own diſpoſitions, if his perſon be diſfigured by a very ill character; by knowing his own purpoſes, if his actions be grievouſly aſperſed) is certain they are ſuch; that he can be as well a faithful witneſs, and juſt Judge for himſelf, as againſt himſelf.

4. Likewiſe this practice will defend us, as from the diſcomforts of harſh cenſure, ſo from the miſtakes and miſcarriages, to which the more favourable opinions of Men, or their flattering expreſſions (thoſe luſcious poiſons) may expoſe us.

Index ipſe ſui ſe totum explorat, ad unguem
Quid proceres, vanique ferat quid opinio vulgi
Securus——

——Nihil eſt quod credere de ſe
Non poſſit, cum laudatur——

'Tis not onely true of great men, but even of all men; The common nature of men diſpoſeth them to be credulous, when they are commended, or receive any ſignification of eſteem from others: Every

Every ear is tickled with this ἡδὺσον ἄκουσμα, this ſweet muſick of applauſe: But we are not to relye upon others imperfect and ill-grounded judgment ſo much as upon our own more certain knowledge concerning our ſelves:

——*ne cui de te plus quam tibi credas.*

Take no man's word before thine own ſenſe, in what concerns thine own caſe and character, is an advice deſerving our regard and practice: For that a man in queſtions of this kind is able to be a skilful and indifferent Umpire between himſelf and others; that he is neither elevated, nor depreſſed in mind by external weights, but keepeth himſelf equally poiſed in a juſt conſiſtence by his own well-informed conſcience; that neither his heart is exaſperated with the bittereſt gall of reproach, nor his head intoxicated with the ſweeteſt wine of flattery, is an invaluable convenience of life; or rather it is a vertue arguing a moſt ſtrong and healthful conſtitution of ſoul. *How great a levity of mind, how great a vanity is it* (ſaith a good Father) *ſetting aſide a man's own conſcience to follow other mens opinions (and even that feigned and forged) to be ſnatched away by the wind of falſe praiſe, to rejoice in being circumvented, and to receive being mocked for a benefit?* From being thus abuſed, this practice alone can ſecure us: If we know our ſelves well, we cannot ſo eaſily be deluded by the miſtakes of others concerning us, on either hand.

Quæ hæc tanta levitas eſt animi, quæ tanta vanitas relicta propria conſcientia alienam opinionem ſequi, & quidem fictam, atque ſimulatam; rapi vento falſæ laudationis, gaudere ad circumventionem ſuam, & illuſionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. (*vel* Paulinus) *ad* Celant.

5. Likewiſe, farther upon the ſame this practice will conduce to qualifie our opinions, and moderate our paſſions toward others; ſo that without intemperate anger, or bitterneſs, we may bear the faults, errours, and infirmities of our brethren; that we ſhall be benign in our carriage, and gentle in our cenſures even toward them, who do not behave themſelves ſo well and wiſely as they ſhould do. St. *Paul* thus admoniſheth the *Galatians*, *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual* (the more ſpiritual whether in truth, or in our own eſteem, the more eſpecially are we obliged hereto) *reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou may be alſo tempted:* σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν, looking upon, or ſpying into thy ſelf; ſuch conſidering our ſelves, taking notice of our own infirmity within, perceiving how ſubject we are to the impreſſions of temptation, and that hence it may be our own caſe to fall and faulter, if occaſion concur with our weakneſs; diſcerning this, I ſay, as it will be a reaſon obliging, ſo it may be an inſtrument conducing to a mitigation of ſpirit toward thoſe, whom we ſee overtaken with miſtake, or overborn by frailty. *Why doſt thou ſee a mote in thy brothers eye, but doſt not conſider the beam in thine own eye?* is our Saviour's queſtion; why a man ſhould do ſo, there cannot (as he implies) any good reaſon be aſſigned; (tis a very unreaſonable and inexcuſable miſcarriage) but whence a man doeth ſo, is obvious and plain; it is, becauſe he curiouſly pryes into other mens doings, and careleſſly neglecteth the obſervation of his own heart: Did we reflect our ſight inwards, we ſhould be more apt to mark our own faults, and leſs ready to diſcover thoſe of others; or however we ſhould be more gently affected in regard to them: For he that knows himſelf a beggarly Wretch, will he reproach poverty to another? He that conſulting the glaſs doth find himſelf ill-favoured, will he upbraid another for want of grace or beauty? He that perceives that the dart will rebound, and thereby wound himſelf, will he not be careful of flinging it? Will a man be forward in pronouncing a heavy ſentence againſt another, who conſiders himſelf by plain conſequence involved in the condemnation thereof? Should a man do ſo, he doth at leaſt render himſelf

Gal. 6. 1.

Marc. Ant. *XI.* 18.

Matt. 7. 2.

Rom. 2. 1. self uncapable of apology, or excuse: So we are told by St. *Paul*: *Every censurer* (πᾶς ὁ κρίνων) *is*, saith he, *inexcusable*; *for that in arraigning another he condemns himself*: guilty is he of inexcusable folly, or impudence; of folly and blindness, if he see not; of extream impudence, if seeing his own obnoxiousness he will not abstain from judging others for that, of which himself is guilty in the same kind, or equivalently in some other. 2 Sam. 12. You know how *David* was caught by *Nathan*, and unwarily adjudged himself to death: And so may every man expose himself, that is rigorous in censure toward others without reflecting on himself, and considering his own heart; wherein he shall find so much ground and matter of being angry with, and judging himself. If we will be fierce and keen, 'tis reason we should be so first, and chiefly there, where our greatest enemies do abide, whence most mischief ariseth to us; where there is fittest matter, and justest cause of passion: Thus is this practice a most proper and effectual remedy for those baneful vices of pride and peevishness in our selves, of malignity and fury toward others. But farther,

Si volumus æqui rerum omnium judices esse, hoc primum nobis suadeamus, neminem esse nostrum sine culpâ. Sen. *de Ir.*

Συγγνώμων ἔφη δεῖν εἶναι πᾶσι τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσι, πλὴν ἑαυτῷ. Cato *Maj.* Plut. *p.* 624.

6. The observation of our heart yieldeth great advantage in being very conducible to render men truly wise and prudent; in those things especially, which most nearly concern them: Giving them to see before them, and to understand what they do; and to proceed without security; as contrarily the neglect thereof rendereth men unadvised and uncertain in their doings. A main point of prudence consisteth in suiting a man's undertakings to his powers and capacities; in not attempting things surpassing his ability, or fitness; and in not declining such useful, or beneficial attempts, as he may well compass. Some are overbold and rash in setting upon things beyond their strength to accomplish, or skill to manage; whence commonly with shame and sorrow they are defeated in their enterprizes; Others are overbackward and diffident, so as not to adventure upon what they may with good advantage, or perhaps ought to perform; thence depriving themselves of the benefits they might obtain, or omitting the duties, which they are obliged to; both which inconveniences usually do proceed from the not looking into, and studying the heart; for the most and greatest impediments of action do lye there; being grounded upon inward indispositions, or disagreeableness of mens temper, capacity, inclination to the matters, to which they apply themselves: A tender foot will be galled and lamed, if you set it going in rugged paths; a weak head will turn, if you place it high, or upon the brink of a precipice; a soft spirit cannot well comport with boisterous employment; he that naturally affects calm and quiet, must not hope to come off well, if he engage himself upon affairs exposed to abundance of care and tumult; nor will he if he be well studied this way, and rightly understand himself, adventure thereupon. It was as well according to wisdom, as modesty, that *David* could say: Psal. 113. 1. *My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me.* In every undertaking two things occur to be considered, what of difficulty is found therein, and what of temptation; whether it can be done, and whether it should be done: It is a folly to spend our care and pains upon that, which is too hard for us to effect, and 'tis worse than so to adventure upon that, which most probably will bring us into sin, and hurt our souls; onely the study of our selves, weighing our power, and trying our temper, will prevent both: He that doeth this may commonly foresee what the case being put he shall do; that if such a temptation doth assault

aſſault him in ſuch circumſtances, his inclinations will be apt to comply therewith, and he ſhall ſcarce be able to reſiſt (that for inſtance he ſhall wax haughty in a ſtate of dignity, become luxurious in abundance of wealth, be diſtracted with care in a buſie employment) and therefore he will not be ſo forward to ingage himſelf upon ſuch occaſions; danger and miſchief being ſo vividly pre-repreſented to his ſight. But he that pondereth not his own heart is ready to preſume, that be the buſineſs what it will, he ſhall come off well; and ſo unadviſedly ruſheth into the ſnare; he aſſumes unweildy burthens upon his ſhoulders, which he ſoon feeleth ſorely to oppreſs and pain him; which he can neither bear with eaſe, nor put off with convenience; When, for inſtance, the Prophet told *Hazael* what Cruelties and Rapines, ſhould (when he got power and opportunity) be committed by him; you ſee how he was ſtartled at the report: *am I a Dog*, ſaith he; that is, can I be ſo vile and baſe; yes, he might himſelf have perceived that he ſhould in likelihood be ſo; the probability of his doing, as the Prophet ſaid, had been no great news to him, if he had obſerved his own inclinations. Good *Agur* on the other ſide did better underſtand himſelf, when he prayed; *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me*; he was conſcious of natural infirmity, and therefore afraid of being in a condition that might prevail upon it; of great wealth, leſt it ſhould tempt him to forgetfulneſs, and neglect of God (*leſt*, (ſaith he) *I be full and deny thee, and ſay who is the Lord?*) of extreme want, leſt it ſhould put him upon unjuſt, diſhoneſt and impious courſes to maintain his life; (*leſt*, adds he, *I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain*;) he ſaw by looking into himſelf, that ſelf-love (the root of pride and injuſtice) was potent in him, and formidable, when occaſion ſhould favour it, and therefore by imploring divine aid, he ſtrove to decline the advantages and occaſions of it. It was good counſel which *Xenophon* tells us the *Oracle* gave *Cræſus*, conſulting about the ſucceſs of his attempt againſt *Cyrus*, Σαυτὸν γνόσκων δ' ἐλαίμων κεῖσι πεήσεις. *Knowing thy ſelf thou ſhalt paſs on happily* (in the courſe of thy life and undertakings:) had he, conſidering his own ability, in relation to the dubious event of things (that as he could not promiſe himſelf good fortune, ſo he did not know how he ſhould comport with bad; being not ſure that he ſhould overcome either his enemies, or himſelf) thus, I ſay, had he complied with the *Oracle*'s advice, he might have eſcaped the loſs and ſorrow which befell him. So is t with us; if we know not the burthen of our Veſſel, we ſhall either put more ſail to it than it can bear, or leſs than will ſuffice to carry it on, it will be overladen, or want fit balaſt: If we are ignorant of our capacities, we ſhall either ſoar too high with a dangerous confidence, or grovel below in a ſluggiſh liſtleſneſs: Studying our ſelves will help to preſerve us in a middle pitch, will direct us in a moderate courſe, wherein we may proceed with ſufficient courage and alacrity; with a prudent foreſight, or at leaſt with a comfortable hope of good ſucceſs.

2 Kings 12. 8.

Prov. 30. 8.

De Cyri Inſtit. 7.

7. Near to that lies another conſiderable benefit, attending this practice, which is, that it will help to render us expedite in our reſolutions, and conſtant to them; conſiſtent with our ſelves, and uniform in our proceedings; whence will ariſe both great convenience to our ſelves, and ſatisfaction to others with whom we deal or converſe: As on the contrary ſide from the neglect thereof we ſhall become ſlow in deliberation, doubtful in reſolution, and unſtable in performance. When any occaſion of acting is preſented, we ſhall be ready to cloſe with what is agreeable to our inclination, and not repugnant to our judgment, if by due ſtudy and experience we are acquainted with them; that acquaintance is a certain

preparation to a ſpeedy choice; and we ſhall upon the ſame grounds conſtantly adhere to our choice, ſtanding upon ſo firm a baſe; and ſo ſhall neither diſcompoſe our ſelves, nor diſappoint others by our irreſolution and inconſtancy. But he that skills not his own heart, firſt will dwell long upon conſultation (not feeling perfectly whither his inward Bias doth draw him) and when he ſeems upon ſome ſuperficial reaſon to have determined on one ſide, ſome diſcordance to his own inclination, or ſome latent prejudice ſoon diſcovering it ſelf, he wavers, and at length falls off; finding that he hath promiſed to himſelf or others what he is unable or unwilling to perform; ſo like St. *James* his two-ſouled man, he is unſteady in all his ways. The hard Student of himſelf is like a man that hath his Eſtate *in numerato*, in ready Caſh, all in his hand, or at his command; he can preſently tell what he can do, and ſatisfie thoſe he hath to do with; go to him, you may know where to have him, even juſt where you left him, or where he uſes to be; you may expect a ſudden diſpatch, and you may rely upon his word; for he knows before-hand what he doeth, and ſhall continue to like; why he determines ſo or ſo; and cannot be removed from his well-grounded purpoſe (that which is by the Philoſopher termed *ratio nec diſſidens, nec hæſitans*, a reaſon that doth not ſtrive, nor ſtick, he is maſter of.) But he that neglects this practice, what he hath any title to, lieth diſperſed, and laid up in corners unknown to himſelf, ſo that himſelf cannot come readily by it; you can hardly tell where to find him; you muſt wait his reſolution, and when 'tis told you, you cannot be aſſured thereof; nor any-wiſe ſatisfied that he will ſtick to his word, or his mind; he knows not throughly what he would have himſelf, can you then hope for a certain anſwer from him? He cannot well truſt himſelf, can you then relie upon him? He will find himſelf miſtaken and croſſed in his own choice, can you expect leſs? *Quid eſt ſapientia? ſemper idem velle, atque idem nolle*: Conſtancy to a Man's ſelf is, ſaith he, the very being of Wiſdom; however nothing more beſeems a Man, more commends him to ſociety, and ſuits him to buſineſs, is more pleaſant and grateful to thoſe, who have to do with him, than ſuch a clear, uniform, ſteady diſpoſition of mind; ſuch a ſmooth and even tenour of action; nothing renders converſation and commerce more unpleaſant, than a fickle lubricity of humour, and unaccountable deformity of behaviour: That ſtudy therefore is very uſeful, which conduceth to breed and maintain the one, and which removeth the other.

Jam. 1. 8.

Sen. *de Vit. B.* 8.

Sen. *Ep.* 20.

8. Again, another valuable convenience of this practice is, that it diſpoſeth unto, and preſerveth a Man's mind in a ſober temper, agreeable to his ſtate, and to the circumſtances into which he is caſt; ſuch a temper I mean as that, which the *Wiſe Man* preſcribes, where he ſaith, *In the day of proſperity be joyful, but in the day of adverſity conſider.* It is apt to beget either a comfortable joy, or a wholſome regret, according as the interiour condition of his ſoul (that wherein the chief cauſe of the one, or of the other affection is grounded) doth ſeaſonably and juſtly require. To be tranſported with mirth and jollity in a ſtate of grievous miſery, when reaſon it ſelf demands ſorrow and pity; to be ſad and dumpiſh when all things flow proſperouſly, either of thoſe will ſeem marvellouſly incongruous, and argue a kind of ſtupidity in him that ſo behaves himſelf. Now there is not in truth any calamity ſo diſaſtrous as that which befals us within our ſelves, no Proſperity ſo worthily delightful as the good proceeding of affairs in our ſouls: 'Tis the moſt excellent pleaſure a Man is capable of, that which doth ſpring from the being conſcious, that his mind doth εὐοδοῦσθαι (as St *John* ſpeaks) that is, go well forward in a happy courſe; that

Eccleſ. 7. 14.

3 John 1. 2.

that good thoughts freely do ſpring up, that good inclinations are ſtrong and prevalent, that good habits of mind wax vigorous; that the love of goodneſs is improved; that he generally doth thrive in health and ſtrength ſpiritual: No increaſe of treaſure can affect the covetous, no riſing in power and dignity can ſatisfie the ambitious, no enjoyment of ſenſual entertainments can raviſh the voluptuous man with ſo true or great content, as the ſenſible proficiency in vertuous and pious diſpoſitions of ſoul, growing *richer unto God*, and ſtronger in the hopes of his favour do produce in him that doth affect it, and can perceive it: 'Tis a joy in all reſpects incomparable; onely wiſe and reaſonable, pure and innocent, firm and durable. As on the other hand if it be ſo that we diſcern, that within our hearts bad thoughts do ſwarm and multiply, bad appetites do ſway, bad cuſtoms do encroach upon us; that deſire of, and delight in good things decay; that we become more dark, dull, unſettled in our ſpiritual apprehenſions, more feeble and languid in our proſecutions of vertue, 'tis a great benefit to have a timely remorſe prompting and urging us to endeavour a deliverance from ſo unhappy a condition: But no man can well either enjoy that comfortable delight, or be affected with this profitable ſorrow, who doth not with a careful attention view his heart, and deſcry how things go there. This conſideration mindeth of a farther and more general advantage accruing from this practice; which is this, that

9. A ſerious inſpection into our hearts doth much avail toward the reformation of our hearts and lives; curing the diſtempers, and correcting the vices of them. For to the curing any diſeaſe it is requiſite to know the complexion and temper of the Patient, and the part affected, and the next cauſes thereof: As the moſt grievous of bodily diſeaſes are ſeated in, or do proceed from the entrails; but not all of them from the ſame one of them; and the ſame diſeaſe depends upon the diſtemper ſometimes of one, ſometimes of another among them: So do all vices (as our *Saviour* expreſly teacheth) iſſue from the heart, or interiour man; ſome from one, ſome from another part or region thereof; and the ſame from different parts: Sometimes natural temper, ſometimes falſe opinion, ſometimes evil cuſtom is the root of the ſame kind of diſeaſe; and 'tis expedient we ſhould know diſtinctly which of them in particular caſes is the root, that accordingly we may underſtand what method of cure to uſe, whence to fetch the remedy, where to apply it; for unskilfulneſs in theſe points may fruſtrate our endeavours of amendment. If the miſchief proceed from natural inclination, we muſt not hope ever utterly to ſubdue it, nor to free our ſelves ſuddenly from the incurſions thereof; nor is bare reaſoning a proper Weapon againſt it; it being grounded in the original conſtitution of the ſoul, either immediately, or as linked to the body; which by no operation of our mind can be ſoon altered; for, *No wiſdom* (as *Seneca* ſpeaketh well) *can remove the natural vices of body or mind; what is infixed and inbred may be allayed by art, not ſubdued.* Reaſon alone and directly, is not able to grapple therewith; ſhe'll break her teeth upon ſo tough and knotty matter: It will weary her armes in vain to ſwim againſt the rapid current of natural propenſion; the violent eruptions thereof may indeed ſomewhat be reſtrained; occaſions of complying therewith may often be declined; it may in time, and by degrees, be weakned by ſubtracting the food and incentives thereof: But eſpecially Devils of this kind muſt, as our Saviour inſtructeth us, be ejected by humble, earneſt and frequent invocation of divine aſſiſtance; without which other means commonly will prove ineffectual: But if the vice proceed

Matt. 15. 18.

Nulla ſapientia naturalia corporis, aut animi vitia ponuntur: quicquid infixum & ingenitum eſt leniter arte, non vincitur. Sen. *Ep.* 11.

Τί φθείρει τὸ ἦθος, ἐνδυόμενον ἦθος. Epict.

proceed onely from ill habit, or the prevalency of bad cuſtom we are to oppoſe a contrary cuſtom thereto, preſently diſuſing that practice, and acting otherwiſe, ſo ſhall we eaſily remove and extirpate it: If neither of theſe cauſes are diſcernable, we may preſume our indiſpoſition is derived from ill opinion; and that conſequently our beſt courſe of redreſſing it, is to examine the reaſon of the thing; to get clear and right apprehenſions concerning it. For example, if we obſerve our ſelves apt to be frequently tranſported with anger, let us look into our hearts, and take notice, whether the root of that diſtemper be a cholerick complexion, or whether it ariſe from an habitual indulgence to our ſelves of being moved upon ſlight cauſes, whereby a peeviſh humour is grown upon us; or whether it cometh from vain conceits of our ſelves, as of Perſons unto whom extraordinary deference and obſervance is due, ſo that no man ſhould preſume to diſſent from our opinion, or contravene our deſire; and as we find, ſo we muſt reſpectively proceed in repreſſing the cauſes of this diſeaſe; praying, if it ariſe from nature, to the Omnipotent (the onely Lord and Commander of nature) that he would by his grace free us from that inflamable temper, and inable us to govern our paſſion; withal ſhunning occaſions of being provoked; abſtaining from ſuch diet, ſuch buſineſs, ſuch company, as naturally do kindle or ferment that humour: If the Malady grow from cuſtom, uſing our ſelves to bear patiently harſh words, unkind dealings, croſs accidents; if our opinion diſpoſe us thereto, reaſoning our ſelves into moderate conceits about our ſelves, conſidering the reaſons that may acquit or excuſe others to us upon occaſion of offence; Uſing all, or ſome of theſe means, or the like, ſuch as the obſervation of our heart ſhall diſcover to us to be moſt proper and ſuitable to the nature, or to the cauſe of this diſtemper infeſting us, we ſhall wholly, or in good part rid our ſelves from it. Again, (to adjoin another example, the matter ſeeming to deſerve our heed) ſuppoſe we experience our ſelves inclining to covetouſneſs; eager in getting, ſolicitous in keeping, unwilling to part with our goods upon reaſonable occaſion (for the maintenance of our convenient reſpect in the World, or for relieving the needs of our Brethren, or for ſerving the publick, or for promoting the intereſts of Piety and Vertue) let us then look, and ſee whether this ariſeth from a natural ſtraitneſs, hardneſs, ſuſpiciouſneſs, or diffidence of Heart (ſome ſuch diſpoſitions may be obſerved in men) or from being by our Education, or manner of life enured to ſuch a love of getting, or of ſparing, or of tenacity; or whether it ſprings from conceits about the worth, or the neceſſity of wealth (that without being furniſhed with heaps of treaſure, we ſhall come into danger of want or diſgrace; we ſhall not be able to maintain our life, or uphold our credit; we ſhall not enjoy any thing, or be any bodies among men) let us, I ſay, by examining our hearts find out from which of theſe ſprings this ſordid diſpoſition floweth, and accordingly ſtrive to correct it; either praying to Almighty God, that he would inlarge and ſupple our heart, if it be natural to us; or addicting our ſelves upon reaſonable occaſion to liberality and free expence, if cuſtom hath therein prevailed upon us; or, if vain ſurmiſes have ſeduced us, rectifying our judgments; as by other good diſcourſes, proper againſt that brutiſh vice, ſo eſpecially by conſidering that God is moſt good and bountiful, and tender of our being overwhelmed with need; that he continually watcheth over us, ſo that he cannot but ſee, and will regard what we want; and that he faithfully hath promiſed, if we endeavour to pleaſe him, and uſe a moderate diligence in honeſt ways to maintain our ſelves, that he will yield his bleſſing, and never will leave

us

is destitute. So in all cases we may proceed discreetly in the cure of our spiritual, and in withstanding the temptations to sin, that assault us, if we do but search into our hearts, and learn thence, whence they flow, and by what they are nourished.

10. This practice farther, doth particularly serve to regulate our devotions, and performances more immediately spiritual; by shewing us what we need to pray for, what we are obliged to give thanks for, what it becomes us to confess, and deprecate, for want thereof we shall be apt not onely to neglect, but indecently to confound, yea miserably to pervert these duties; to confound them by praying for what is already given us, is put into our hand, or lies within our reach; for which therefore we are not to pray, but to render thanks; also by giving thanks formally for that, which perhaps we are far from possessing, and do most want; so, I say, we shall be apt to confound and misplace, to render vain and chimerical in a sort our spiritual addresses, as wanting due ground and object; yea to pervert them by asking for things really prejudicial and hurtful to us (in the circumstances we stand) and thanking God for what Psal. 73. 18.
in anger and judgment he dispenseth to us (so indeed are many appearing Heb. 12. 11.
goods, grateful to present sense) as also deprecating things most beneficial and useful, and healthful to our souls; neglecting to return thanks for what God disposeth in mercy (so are many things at present bitter, and unsavoury to our carnal appetite and fancy) thus from ignorance of our selves, and what we truly need, are we apt to pervert our devotions, not *Evertere domos totas optantibus ipsis Dii faciles, &c.* Juv. *Sat.* 10.
onely defeating our selves of the advantages they might yield us; but (if God be not more gracious than to hearken to us, and to grant our wishes) bringing lamentable mischief on our selves. Many examples of these confusions and perverse misapplications of devotion both Scripture affords, and experience will suggest, if we observe them. You know the comparison in the *Gospel* between the devotions of the *Pharisee* and the *Publican*, with the different acceptance they found: The one was prompt Luke 18.
enough to give thanks for the graces he had received, and the advantages he conceived that he had in his qualities, and in his performances above others; but not having duly studied himself; did not perceive, that he was rather bound to ask pardon for the pride of his heart, and the vanity that adhered to his performances, which rendered his thanksgiving very improper and unseasonable: The other being conscious of his demerits and wants, with a manner suitable to his condition, in words few, but full and fit, did confess his unworthiness (which to do did best beseem him) and implored mercy (which was the thing he chiefly needed) so was his discreet Prayer better accepted, than the others impertinent thanksgiving: *I tell you* (saith our *Saviour*) *this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.* Luke 18. 14.
The two Sons of *Zebedee*, conceiting that our Lord would shortly become a great Prince, and affecting to become Favourites then, did confidently sue for the next place of dignity about him; our Lord repressed their fond ambition by downright telling them first that Matt. 20. 21.
they knew not what they asked; then by demanding of them whether they were able to undergo the trials they should meet with; implying what they should rather have requested; that they more needed humility and patience, than pomp and pleasure: And it was the same two persons, whose intemperate zeal he otherwhere checked with an οὐκ οἴδατε οἵου πνεύματος, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are*: And no wonder, if they who knew Luke 9. 55.
not what they were, did ask they knew not what; that being ignorant of their own hearts, they should endite absurd petitions; that in such a case they should desire things not onely incongruous and inconvenient,

but

but dangerous and deſtructive to themſelves. For to make a right diſtinction of theſe duties; to be able diſcreetly and pertinently (if I may ſo ſpeak) to converſe with God it is requiſite to look into our hearts; and from them to take fit matter, due meaſure, right ſeaſon of requeſt, and of acknowledgment reſpectively; things commonly not being as they appear to our preſent ſenſe, or to our groſs conceit, in themſelves, or in their degree good or bad; but according to the diſpoſition of our hearts, and the effects they work upon them: That is not good, which pleaſeth our ſenſe and fancy, nor that bad, which diſguſts them; but that is good, which rendereth our heart wiſer and better; which correcteth our inclinations, compoſeth our affections, informeth our judgments rightly, and purifieth our intentions; that is bad, which hath contrary effects within us. We it's likely ſhould pray with greateſt ſerioufneſs and earneſtneſs for the removal of thoſe infirmities, for eaſe from thoſe afflictions, which we ſee the Holy *Apoſtles* (being better inſtructed in things, being more acquainted with themſelves) did rejoice, did glory in, did give thanks for; as finding the wholſome operations they had upon their hearts (that by them their vertues were exerciſed, and improved, their faith tried, their patience increaſed, their hope confirmed; that, (to uſe the *Apoſtles* Words) they did *in the ſequele return the peaceful fruit of righteouſneſs to thoſe who were exerciſed by them*; but leaving this Point, though deſerving perhaps farther conſideration, I proceed, and ſay farther, that

Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 5. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Gal. 6. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 6. Heb. 12. 11.

11. The continual viſitation of our inward parts doth not onely yield much advantage, (as in ſome meaſure hath been ſhewed) at the long-run by influence at the ſpring-head upon the principles and cauſes of action, but doth immediately conduce to good practice, preventing and ſtifling in the very birth many ſinful and vain practices: That ſo many indiſcreet and impertinent, ſo many irregular and unſavoury, ſo many unjuſt and uncharitable ſpeeches do iſſue from our mouths, it is eſpecially becauſe we are not then imployed upon this duty; are not watching over our hearts, and obſerving thoſe inward fountains (levity and wantonneſs of thought, precipitancy and diſorder of paſſion) from whence they overflow; were we intent there, we ſhould perhaps endeavour to ſtop the current, and contain theſe inward bad motions from venting themſelves. The like we may ſay concerning many unwarrantable actions, into which we inconſiderately plunge our ſelves, not heeding whence they ſpring: Did we regard that ſuch actions were ariſing from ambitious, covetous, froward diſpoſitions; or from certain ill-grounded prejudices lurking in our minds, we ſhould often ſurely forbear them; but while we keep none, or bad ſentinels; while in the cuſtody of our hearts we ſleep, or are drowſie; while we neglect to examine and weigh our actions what they are, and whence they come, they (although very bad and hurtful) do ſteal by us, and paſs as friends, and we hear no more of them, but in their woful conſequences. What efficacy the conſideration of God's omnipreſent eye, beholding all our doings, hath, and how all wiſe men do preſs it as a powerful means to contain us from bad action, you cannot but well know; as likewiſe that ſome of them in order to the ſame purpoſe direct us to conceive our ſelves always under the inſpection of ſome perſon eſpecially venerable for his worth, or for his relation to us, whom we ſhould be afraid, or aſhamed to diſpleaſe: And ſurely were the faith concerning God's preſence, or the fancy concerning the preſence of a *Cato*, or a *Lælius* ſtrong enough, they could not but have great effect: However did we but live even in our own preſence, under the eye of our own judgment and conſcience; regarding not onely the matter and body, but the reaſon and

Sen. *Ep.* 11. 25.

and ground (that is the ſoul) of our actings; even that would do much; the love and reverence of our ſelves would ſomewhat check and controll us; we ſhould fear to offend, we ſhould be aſhamed to vilify even our ſelves by fond or foul proceedings: It would (in the Philoſophers eſteem) ſupply the room of any other Keeper or Monitor, if we could thus keep our ſelves: *If* (ſaith he) *we have ſo far profited, as to have got a reverence of our ſelves, we may then well let go a Tutour, or Pedagogue.*

Sen. *Ep.* 25.

Cum jam profeceris tantum, ut ſit tibi etiam tui reverentia, licebit dimittas pædagogum. Ibid.

12. This practice doth much conduce to the knowledge of humane nature, and the general diſpoſitions of mankind, which is an excellent and moſt uſeful part of Wiſdom: For the principal inclinations and firſt motions of the ſoul are alike in all men; whence he that by diligent ſtudy of himſelf hath obſerved them in his own ſoul, may thence collect them to be in others; he hath at leaſt a great advantage of eaſily tracing them, of ſoon deſcrying them, of clearly perceiving them in thoſe he converſeth with; the which knowledge is of great uſe, as directing us how to accommodate our ſelves in our behaviour and dealing with others.

No Man indeed can be a good Inſtructor or Adviſer in Moral Affairs, who hath not attained this Skill, and doth not well underſtand the nature of Man: His Precepts and Rules will certainly be fallacious, or miſapplied without it: This is that, which rendered the Dictates of the *Stoicks* and other ſuch Philoſophers ſo extravagant and unpracticable, becauſe they framed them not according to the real nature of Man, ſuch as is exiſtent in the World, but according to an Idea formed in their own imaginations.

Some Caution indeed is in this matter to be uſed, that thoſe motions of Soul, which proceed from particular Temper and Complexion, from ſupervenient Principles or Habits, may be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe which are natural and common unto all: Which diſtinction to make is of great uſe and benefit, in order to the governing, reſtraining or correcting them.

If there be any in us, which are not obſervable in any other men; or in other men, which are not in us, thoſe do not ariſe from common nature, but from the particular diſpoſition of one or other reſpectively.

13. I add laſtly, that univerſally this Practice is requiſite and neceſſary for the well-governing of our Heart. Politicians inculcate much, that to the well-governing of a People, ſquaring fit Laws for it, and keeping it in good order, the nature and humour of that People ſhould be chiefly heeded and well underſtood, for that the grave *Romans*, and light *Greeks*; the ſoft *Perſians*, and ſtout *Germans*; the ſubtile *Africans*, and groſs *Scythians* would not be well managed in the ſame manner. So to govern any man's heart (ſince the hearts of men, as their faces, and as their voices, differ according to diverſities of complexion, of age, of education, of cuſtom and manner of living) it conduceth to know how it is diſpoſed from any of thoſe, or the like cauſes. (But how we are to guide and govern our hearts, and what particular influence this practice hath thereupon, I reſerve for other Meditations; when we ſhall endeavour more diſtinctly to ſhew how we may apply our thoughts to due objects; how curb and correct our inclinations; how order our paſſions; how rectify our opinions; how purify our intentions, now) I conclude with the good *Pſalmiſt*'s Requeſts to God Almighty: *Teach us thy way, O Lord, unite our hearts to fear thy name. Give us underſtanding, and we ſhall keep thy Law, yea we ſhall obſerve it with our whole heart. Search us O God, and know our hearts; try us, and know our thoughts; ſee if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlaſting.* Amen.

Vid. Naz. *Orat.* 1.

Pſal. 86. 11.

Pſal. 119. 34.

Pſal. 139. 23.

SER-

SERMON XIV.

The Conſideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſedom.

THIS *Pſalm* is upon ſeveral peculiar accompts very remarkable; for its antiquity, in which it perhaps doth not yield to any parcel of Scripture; for the eminency of its Authour, *Moſes* the Man of God; the greateſt of the ancient Prophets (moſt in favour, and (as it were) moſt intimate with God:) 'Tis alſo remarkable for the form and matter thereof, both affording much uſeful inſtruction. In it we have a great Prince, the Governour of a numerous People ſequeſtring his mind from the management of publick Affairs to private Meditations; from beholding the preſent outward appearances, to conſidering the real nature and ſecret cauſes of things: In the midſt of all the ſplendour and pomp, of all the ſtir and tumult about him he obſerves the frailty of humane condition, he diſcerns the Providence of God juſtly ordering all; this he does not onely in way of wiſe conſideration, but of ſerious devotion, moulding his obſervations into pious acknowledgments, and earneſt prayers to God; thus while he caſts one eye upon Earth viewing the occurrences there, lifting up the other to Heaven; there ſeeing God's all-governing Hand, thence ſeeking his gracious favour and mercy. Thus doth here that great and good Man teach us all, (more particularly Men of high Eſtate, and much Buſineſs) to find opportunities of withdrawing their thoughts from thoſe things, which commonly amuſe them, (the Cares, the Glories, the Pleaſures of this World) and fixing them upon matters more improvable to devotion; the tranſitorineſs of their Condition, and their ſubjection to God's juſt Providence; joining alſo to theſe Meditations ſutable acts of Religion, due acknowledgments to God and humble prayers. This was his practice among the greateſt encumbrances that any man could have; and it ſhould alſo be ours. Of thoſe his devotions, addreſſed to God, the Words are part, which I have choſen for the ſubject of my meditation and preſent diſcourſe; concerning the

the meaning of which I shall first touch somewhat; then propound that observable in them, which I design to insist upon.

The Prophet *David* hath in the 39th *Psalm* a Prayer very near in words, and of kin (it seems) in sense to this here; *Lord*, prays he, *Make me to know my end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am*: Concerning the drift of which place, as well as of this here, it were obvious to conceive, that both these Prophets do request of God, that he would discover to them the definite term of their life (which by his decree he had fixed, or however by his universal prescience he did discern; concerning which we have these words in *Job*, *Seeing man's days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds, that he cannot pass*) we might, I say, at first hearing be apt to imagine, that their Prayer unto God is, (for the comfort of their mind burthened with afflictions, or for their better direction in the management of their remaining time of life) that God would reveal unto them the determinate length of their life. But this sense, which the Words seem so naturally to hold forth is by many of the Fathers rejected; for that the knowledge of our lives determinate measure is not a fit matter of Prayer to God; that being a secret reserved by God to himself, which to inquire into savours of presumptuous curiosity; the universal validity of which reason I will not debate; but shall defer so much to their judgment, as to suppose that the numbring of our days (according to their sense) doth here onely imply a confused indefinite computation of our days number, or the length of our life; such as, upon which it may appear, that necessarily our life cannot be long (not according to the accompt mentioned in this *Psalm*) the same with that of *Solon*, in *Herodotus* (above 70 or 80 Years, especially as to purposes of health, strength, content) will probably by reason of various accidents, to which it is exposed, be much shorter (7 or 10 Years according to a moderate esteem) may possibly, from surprises undiscoverable, be very near to its period; by few instants removed from death (a Year, a Month, a Day, it may be somewhat less.) This I shall allow to be the *Arithmetick* that *Moses* here desires to learn; whence it doth follow that teaching (or making to know, so it is in the *Hebrew*) doth import here (as it doth otherwhere frequently in Scripture) God's affording the Grace to know practically, or with serious regard to consider this state and measure of our life (for in speculation no Man can be ignorant of humane lives brevity and uncertainty; but most Men are so negligent and stupid, as not to regard it sufficiently, not to employ this knowledge to any good purpose). This Interpretation I chuse, being in it self plausible enough, and countenanced by so good authority; yet the former might well enough (by good consequence, if not so immediately) serve my design: Or be a ground able to support the discourse I intend to build upon the Words; the subject whereof briefly will be this, that the consideration of our lives certain and necessary brevity and frailty, is a mean proper and apt to dispose us toward the wise conduct of our remaining life; to which purpose such a consideration seems alike available, as the knowledge of its punctual or definite measure; or more than it; upon the same, or greater reasons.

Psal. 39. 4.

Job 14. 5.

Οὐ γὰρ ἱστορίας ἐχόντων ἀνθρώπων ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι ἄνθρωποι ζῶουσι θνητὸν ἅπαν ὅτι γέγονεν εἰς τὸ τελευτᾶν. Plut. *ad* Apoll. *p.* 202.

Quis est tam stultus, quamvis sit adolescens, cui sit exploratum se vel ad vesperum esse victurum. Cic. *de Sen.*

As for the latter clause, *that we may apply our hearts to wisedom*; 'tis according to the *Hebrew*, *and we shall bring the heart to wisedom*; implying, the application of our hearts to wisedom to be consequent upon the skill

and practice (beſtowed by God) of thus computing our days. As for *wiſedom*, that may denote either *ſapience*, a habit of knowing what is true; or prudence, a diſpoſition of chuſing what is good; we may here underſtand both, eſpecially the latter; for, as *Tully* ſaith of Philoſophy, *Omnis ſumma Philoſophia ad beatè vivendum refertur*, The ſum or whole of Philoſophy refers to living happily; ſo all Divine Wiſedom doth reſpect good practice. The word alſo comprehends all the conſequences and adjuncts of ſuch wiſdom (for ſo commonly ſuch words are wont by way of *metonymie* to denote, together with the things primarily ſignified, all that naturally flow from, or that uſually are conjoined with them) in brief (to ceaſe from more explaining that, which is in it ſelf conſpicuous enough) I ſo underſtand the Text, as if the Prophet had thus expreſſed himſelf: Since, O Lord, all things are in thy hand, and ſovereign diſpoſal; ſince it appears that man's life is ſo ſhort and frail, ſo vexatious and miſerable; ſo expoſed to the juſt effects of thy diſpleaſure; we humbly beſeech thee, ſo to inſtruct us by thy wiſedom, ſo to diſpoſe us by thy grace; that we may effectually know; that we may ſeriouſly conſider the brevity and uncertainty of our lives durance; whence we may be induced to underſtand, regard, and chuſe thoſe things which good reaſon dictates beſt for us; which according to true wiſedom, it moſt concerns us to know and perform. From which ſenſe of the words we might infer many uſeful documents, and draw matter of much wholſome diſcourſe; but paſſing over all the reſt, I ſhall onely inſiſt upon that one point, which I before intimated, *viz.* that the ſerious conſideration of the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life is a proper inſtrument conducible to the bringing our hearts to wiſedom, to the making us to diſcern, attend unto, embrace and proſecute ſuch things as are truly beſt for us; that it is available to the prudent conduct and management of our life; the truth of which propoſition is grounded upon the divine Prophet his opinion: He apprehended ſuch a knowledge or conſideration to be a profitable means of inducing his heart to wiſedom; wherefore he prays God to grant it him in order to that end; ſuppoſing that effect would proceed from this cauſe. And that it is ſo in way of reaſonable influence I ſhall endeavour to ſhew by ſome following reaſons.

De fin. II. p. 95.

Natura dedit uſuram vitæ, tanquam pecuniæ, nulla præſtituta die. Tuſc. quæſt. I. p. 326.

1 John 2. 17. *Love not the world; for—— the world paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof.*

I. The ſerious conſideration of our lives frailty and ſhortneſs will confer to our right valuation (or eſteem) of things, and conſequently to our well-placing, and our duly moderating our cares, affections and endeavours about them. For as we value things, ſo are we uſed to affect them, to ſpend our thoughts upon them, to be earneſt in purſuance or avoiding of them. There be two ſorts of things we converſe about, good and bad; the former, according to the degree of their appearance ſo to us (that is, according to our eſtimation of them) we naturally love, delight in, deſire and purſue; the other likewiſe in proportion to our opinion concerning them, we do more or leſs loath and ſhun. Our actions therefore being all thus directed and grounded, to eſteem things aright both in kind and degree (ὀρθὴ ὑπόληψις τῶν ἀξίων, to aſſign every thing its due price, as *Epictetus* ſpeaks; *quanti quidque ſit judicare*, to judge what each thing is worth as *Seneca*,) is in order the firſt, in degree a main part of wiſedom; and as ſo is frequently by wiſe men commended. Now among

Primum eſt, ut quanti quidque ſit judices; ſecundum, ut impetum ad illa capias ordinatum temperatumque; tertium, ut inter impetum tuum, actionemque conveniat, ut in omnibus iſtis tibi ipſi conſentias. Sen. Epiſt. 89.

among qualities that commend or vilifie things unto us, duration and certainty have a chief place; they often alone suffice to render things valuable or contemptible. Why is Gold more precious than Glass or Chrystal; why prefer we a Ruby before a Rose, or a Gilly-flower? 'tis not because those are more serviceable, more beautiful, more grateful to our senses than these (it is plainly otherwise) but because these are brittle and fading, those solid and permanent; these we cannot hope to retain the use or pleasure of long; those we may promise our selves to enjoy so long as we please; whence on the other side is it, that we little fear or shun any thing how painful, how offensive soever, being assured of its soon passing over, the biting of a flea, or the prick in letting bloud? The reason is evident; and that in general nothing can on either hand be considerable (either to value or disesteem) which is of a short continuance. Upon this ground therefore let us tax the things concerning us whether good or bad, relating to this life, or to our future state; and first the good things relating to this life; thence we shall be disposed to judge truly concerning them, what their just price is, how much of affection, care and endeavour they deserve to have expended on them. In general, and in the lump concerning them all St. *Paul* tells us, that τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου παράγει, *the* shape or *fashion* (all that is apparent or sensible) in *this present world doth flit, and soon give us the go-by*: We gaze a while upon these things, as *in transitu*, or *intra conspectum*; as they pass by us, and keep a while in sight; but they are presently gone from us, or we from them. They are but like objects represented in a Glass; which having viewed a-while, we must shortly turn our backs, or shut our eyes upon them, then all vanishes, and disappears unto us. Whence he well infers an indifferency of affection toward them; a slackness in the enjoyment of them to be required of us; a *using this world, as if we used it not*; a *buying, as if we were not to possess*; a *weeping, as if we wept not*; *and a rejoicing, as if we rejoiced not*; a kind of negligence and unconcernedness about these things. *The world* (saith St. *John*) *passeth away, and the desire thereof*; whatever seemeth most lovely and desirable in the World is very flitting; however our desire and our enjoyment thereof must suddenly cease. Imagine a man therefore possessed of all worldly goods, arm'd with power, flourishing in credit, flowing with Plenty, swimming in all delight (such as were sometime *Priamus, Polycrates, Cræsus, Pompey*) yet since he is withal supposed a man and mortal; subject both to fortune and death; none of those things can he reasonably confide, or much satisfy himself in; they may be violently divorced from him by fortune, they must naturally be loosed from him by death; the closest union here cannot last longer than till death us depart; wherefore no man upon such accompt can truly call or (if he consider well) heartily esteem himself happy; a *man cannot* hence (as the most able judge, and trusty voucher of the commodities doth pronounce) *receive profit or content from any labour he taketh* (upon these transitory things) *under the sun*. Why then (let me inquire) do we so cumber our heads with care, so rack our hearts with passion, so wast our spirits with incessant toil about these transitory things? why do we so highly value, so ardently desire, so eagerly pursue, so fondly delight in, so impatiently want, or lose, so passionately contend for and emulate one another in regard to these bubbles; forfeiting and foregoing our homebred most precious goods, tranquillity and repose, either of mind or body, for them? Why erect we such mighty fabricks of expectation and confidence upon

1 Cor. 7. 31.

——πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς,
Ἐς ὃ μὴ, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ πάντα παρερχόμεθα. *Gr. Epig. Anthol.*

1 John 2. 17. Ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ.

Eccl. 1. 3. &c.

Commorandi natura nobis diverſorum dedit non habitandi locum. Cic. *de Sen.*

ſuch unſteady ſands? why dreſs we up theſe our Inns, as if they were our homes, and are as careful about a few nights lodging here, as if we deſigned an everlaſting abode (we that are but *ſojourners and pilgrims* here, and have *no fixed habitation* upon earth; who *come forth like a flower, and*

1 Pet. 2. 11. 1. Heb. 13. 11. 11. 15. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Job 14. 1. Pſal. 78. 39. Jam. 4. 14. Iſa. 64. 6. Pſal. 102. 3. 90. 5. 9. 103. 15. 39. 5. 144. 4. 119. 19. Pſal. 103. 15. Iſa. 40. 6.

are ſoon cut down; flee like a ſhadow and continue not; are winds paſſing away, and coming not again; who fade all like a leaf, whoſe life is a vapour appearing for a little time, and then vaniſhing away; whoſe days are a hand-breadth, and age is nothing; whoſe days are conſumed like ſmoak, and years are ſpent as a tale. Who wither like the graſs, upon which we feed; *and crumble as the duſt,* of which we are compacted; for thus the Scripture by appoſite compariſons repreſents our condition) yet we build (like the Men of *Agrigentum*) as if we were to dwell here for ever; and hoard up, as if we were to enjoy after many ages; and inquire, as if we would never have done knowing? The Citizens of *Croton* (a Town in *Italy*) had a manner (it is ſaid) of inviting to Feaſts a Year before the time, that the Gueſts in appetite and garb might come well prepared to them; do we not uſually reſemble them in this ridiculous ſolicitude and curioſity; *ſpes inchoando longas,* commenſing deſigns, driving on projects, which a longer time than our life would not ſuffice to accompliſh? How deeply do we concern our ſelves in all that is ſaid or done; when the morrow all will be done away and forgotten? when (excepting what our duty to God, and charity towards men requires of us, and that which concerns our future eternal ſtate) what is done in the World, who gets or loſes, which of the ſpokes in fortune's wheel is up, and which down, is of very little conſequence to us. But the more to abſtract our minds from, and temper our affections about theſe ſecular matters, let us examine particularly by this ſtandard, whether the moſt valued things in this World deſerve that eſtimate which they bear in the common Market, or which popular opinion aſſigns them.

1. To begin then with that which takes chief place, which the World moſt dotes on, which ſeems moſt great and eminent among men; ſecular ſtate and grandeur, might and proweſs, honour and reputation, favour and applauſe of men, all the objects of humane pride and ambition; of this kind, St. *Peter* thus pronounces πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου, *All the glory of*

1 Pet. 2. 24.

men is as the flower of the graſs; the graſs is dried up, and the flower thereof doth fall off; 'tis as the flower of the graſs, how ſpecious ſoever, yet the moſt fading and failing part thereof; the graſs it ſelf will ſoon wither, and the flower doth commonly fall off before that. We cannot hold this flower of worldly glory beyond our ſhort time of life; and we may eaſily much ſooner be deprived of it: Many tempeſts of fortune may beat it down, many violent hands may crop it, 'tis apt of its ſelf to fade upon the ſtalk; however the ſun (the influence of age and time) will aſſuredly

Pſal. 62. 9.

burn and dry it up, with our life that upholds it. *Surely* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye:* Men of high degree; The mighty Princes, the famous Captains, the ſubtile Stateſmen, the grave Senatours; they who turn and toſs about the World

Iſa. 14. 17.

at their pleaſure; who, (in the *Prophet*'s language) *make the Earth tremble, and ſhake Kingdoms*: Even theſe, they are a lie; (ſaid he, who himſelf was none of the leaſt conſiderable among them, and by experience well knew their condition, the greateſt and moſt glorious Man of his time King *David*.) They are a lie; that is, their ſtate preſents ſomething of brave and admirable to the eye of Men; but 'tis only *deceptio viſus*; a ſhew without a ſubſtance; it doth but delude the careleſs ſpectatours with

falſe

false appearance; it hath nothing under it solid or stable; being laid in the balance (the royal *Prophet* there subjoins; that is, being weighed in the scales of right judgment, being thoroughly considered) it will prove lighter than vanity it self; it is less valuable than mere emptiness, and nothing it self; that saying sounds like an *hyperbole*, but it may be true in a strict sense: Seeing, that the care and pains in maintaining it, the fear and jealousie of losing it, the envy, obloquy and danger that surround it, the snares it hath in it, and temptations inclining men to be pufft up with Pride, to be insolent and injurious, to be corrupted with pleasure (with other bad concomitants thereof) do more than countervail what-ever either of imaginary worth or real convenience may be in it. Perhaps could it without much care, trouble and hazard continue for ever, or for a long time, it might be thought somewhat considerable; but since its duration is uncertain and short; since *man in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish*; that they who look so *like Gods*, and are called so, and are worshipped as so, *yet must die like men* (like men, yea *like sheep shall be laid in the grave*;) Since, as 'tis said of the King of *Babylon* in *Esay*; *their pomp must be brought down to the grave, and the noise of their viols*; *the worm shall be spread under them, and the worm shall cover them*; seeing that a moment of time shall extinguish all their lustre, and still all that tumult about them; that they must be disrobed of their Purple, and be cloathed with Corruption; that their so spatious and splendid Palaces must soon be exchanged for close darksome Coffins; that both their own breath, and the breath of them who now applaud them must be stopped; that they who now bow to them, may presently trample on them; and they who to day trembled at their presence, may the morrow scornfully insult upon their memory: *Is this the man* (will they say, as they did of that great King) *who made the Earth to tremble*; *that did shake Kingdoms*; *that made the World as a Wilderness*; *and destroyed the Kingdoms thereof*? Since this is the fate of the greatest, and most glorious among Men, what reason can there be to admire their condition; to prize such vain and short liv'd preeminences? For who can accompt it a great happiness to be styled and respected as a Prince, to enjoy all the Powers and Prerogatives of highest dignity for a day, or two; then being obliged to descend into a sordid and despicable estate? Who values the fortune of him that is brought forth upon the Stage to act the Part of a Prince; though he be attired there, and attended as such; hath all the garb and ceremony, the ensigns and appurtenances of Majesty about him; speaks and behaves himself imperiously; is flattered and worshipped accordingly; yet, who in his heart doth adore this Idol; doth admire this mockery of greatness? Why not? because after an hour or two the Play is over, and this Man's reign is done. And what great difference is there between this and the greatest worldly state? between *Alexander* in the History, and *Alexander* on the Stage? Are not (in the *Psalmist*'s accompt) *all our years spent as a tale that is told*; or, as a Fable, that is acted? This in comparison of that, what is it at most, but telling the same story, acting the same Part a few times over? What are a few years more than a few hours repeated not very often? not so often as to make any considerable difference; so a great Emperour reflected: *τί διαφέρει τεθνήκεσι τετραετώσι*; *what* (said he) *doth the age of an infant, dying within three days, differ from that of Nestor, who lived three ages of men*; since both shall be past and ended; both then meet, and thereby become equal; since considering the immense time that runs on, and how little a part thereof any of us takes up (*juvenes & senes in æquo*

Isa. 14. 16. Psal. 90. Anton. *IV.* 50. Sen. *Ep.* 99. 24.

æquo sumus) we are all alike young and old; as a drop and a Pint bottle in compare to the Ocean are in a sort equal, that is, both altogether inconsiderable. *Quid enim diu est, ubi finis est?* saith St. *Austine*: *what can be long that shall be ended*; which coming to that pass is as if it never had been.

Mihi ne diuturnum quidem quidquam videtur, in quo est aliquid extremum, &c. Cic. *de Senect.*

Since then upon this accompt (upon worldly accompts, I speak all this; and excepting that Dignity and Power may be Talents bestowed by God, or advantages to serve God, and promote the good of Men; excepting also the relation Persons justly instated in them bear to God as his Deputies and Ministers; in which respects much reverence is due to their Persons, much value to their Places; even the more, by how much less their present outward Estate is considerable, and because at present they receive so slender a reward for all their cares and pains employ'd in the discharge of their Offices; this I interpose to prevent mistakes, lest our discourse should seem to disparage, or detract from the reverence due to Persons in eminent Place. But since, under this caution) all worldly Power and Glory appear so little valuable, the consideration hereof may avail to moderate our affections about them; to quell all ambitious desires of them, and all vain complacencies in them. For why should we so eagerly seek and pursue such empty shadows, which if we catch, we in effect catch nothing; and whatever it is, doth presently slip out of our hands? Why do we please our selves in such evanid dreams; is it not much better to rest quiet and content in any station wherein God hath placed us, than to trouble our selves and others in climbing higher to a Precipice, where we can hardly stand upright, and whence we shall certainly tumble down into the grave? This Consideration is also a remedy, proper to remove all regret and envy grounded upon such regards? For why, though suppose Men of small worth, or vertue should flourish in Honour and Power, shall we repine thereat? Is it not as if one should envy to a Butterfly, its gaudy Wings; to a Tulip its beautiful colours, to the Grass its pleasant verdure; that Grass, to which in this *Psalm* we are compared; *which in the morning flourisheth, and groweth up, in the evening is cut down and withereth*? I may say of this discourse with the *Philosopher*, ἰδιωτικὸν μὲν, ὅμως δ' ἀγωνικὸν βοήσομαι, 'tis a homely remedy (there may be divers better ones) yet hath its efficacy; for *David* himself made use thereof more than once: *Be not, saith he, afraid* (or troubled) *when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is encreased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend with him.* *I was* (saith he again) *envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked; but I went into the sanctuary, then understood I their end; surely thou didst set them in slippery places—how are they brought into desolation as in a moment:* Thus considering the lubricity and transitorines of that Prosperity, which foolish and wicked Men enjoyed, did serve to cure that envious distemper, which began to affect the good man's Heart.

Psal. 90. 6.

Ant. *IV.* 50.

Psal. 49. 16. 73. 17. 37. 1.

Prov. 23. 17.

2. But let us descend from Dignity and Power (that is, from names and shews) to somewhat seeming more real and substantial; to Riches; that great and general Idol, the most devoutly adored that ever any hath been in the World; which hath a Temple almost in every House, an Altar in every Heart; to the gaining of which most of the thoughts, most of the labours of Men immediately tend; in the Possession of which Men commonly deem the greatest Happiness doth consist. But this consideration we discourse about, will easily discover, that even this, as all other Idols, is *nothing in the World*, nothing true and solid; Will (I say) justify that advice

1 Cor. 8. 4.

advice and verifie that assertion of the *Wise-man*: *Labour not for riches, will thou set thy heart upon that which is not?* it well applied will pluck down the high places reared to this great Idol of Clay in Mens Hearts; will confute the common Conceits and Phrases, which so beautifie Wealth; shewing that whoever dotes thereon is more truly and properly styled a miserable Man, than a happy, or blessed one: For is he not indeed miserable, who *makes lies his refuge*, who confides in that which will deceive and disappoint him? The *Prophet* assures us so: *Woe* (saith the Prophet *Habbakkuk*) *woe be to him, who coveteth an evil covetousness to his house; that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil*: Men (he implies) imagine by getting Riches, they have secured and raised themselves above the reach of all mischief: But ye see it was in the *Prophet*'s judgment a woful mistake. St. *Paul* doth warn Men (very emphatically) *not to hope ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδηλότητι, in the uncertainty* (or obscurity) *of riches*; intimating, that to trust in them, is to trust in darkness it self; in that wherein we can discern nothing; in we know not what? They are, we cannot but observe, subject to an infinity of chances, many of them obvious and notorious; more of them secret and unaccomptable: *They make* (the *Wise-man* tells us) *themselves wings* (they need it seems no help for that) *and fly away like as an eagle toward heaven* (quite out of sight, and beyond our reach they of their own accord do swiftly fly away) however, should they be disposed to stay with us, we must fly from them; were they inseparably affixed to this life, yet must they together with that be severed from us; as we came naked of them into this World, so naked shall we return: *As he came*, saith the *Preacher*, *so shall he go*; *and what profit* (then) *hath he that laboureth for the wind?* From hence, that we must so soon part with riches, he infers them to be but wind; a thing not any wise to be fixed or setled; which 'tis vain to think we can appropriate, or retain; and vain therefore greedily to covet, or pursue: So the *Psalmist* also reasons it: *Surely, every man* (saith he) *walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.* Men, in his accompt, that troubled themselves in accumulating Wealth, did but idly delude themselves, fansying to receive content from such things, which they must themselves soon be separated from; and leave at uncertainties, to be disposed of they know not how: That which in his wise Son's esteem was sufficient to make *a man hate all his labour under the sun*: *Because*, saith he, *I shall leave it to the man that shall be after me, and who knoweth, whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet he shall have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed my self wise under the sun*: All, it seems, that we are so wise, and so industrious about; that we so beat our heads about, and spend our spirits upon, is at most but *gaudium hæredis*; *the joy of an heir*, and that an uncertain one (for your Son, your Kinsman, your Friend may for all you can know dye before you, or soon after you) 'tis but a being at great pains and charges in tilling the Land, and sowing and dressing it; whence we are sure not to reap any benefit to our selves, and cannot know who shall do it.

Prov. 23. 5.

Ὀλβιος, *Beatus, &c. pro divite.*

Hab. 2. 9.

1 Tim. 6. 19.

Prov. 23. 5.

Job 1. 21. 27. 19. 1 Tim. 6. 7. Eccl. 5. 21.

Psal. 39. 6.

Eccl. 2. 18.

In his elaborant, quæ sciunt nihil omnino ad se pertinere; serunt arbores quæ alteri sæculo prosint. Cic. *de Senect.*

The rich man (St. *James* tells us) *as the flower of the grass shall he pass away; for the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion thereof perisheth; So also shall the rich man fade in his ways*; all the comfort (we see by the *Apostles* discourse) and the convenience, all the grace and ornament

Jam. 1. 11.

ornament that riches are supposed to yield will certainly wither and decay, either before, or with us; whenever the sun (that is, either some extream mischance in life, or the certain destiny of death) doth arise, and make impression on them. But our *Saviour* hath best set out the nature and condition of these things in that *Parable* concerning the man, who having had a plentiful crop of Corn, and having projected for the disposal of it, resolved then to *bless himself*, and entertain his mind with pleasing discourses, that having, in readiness and security, so copious accommodations, he might now enjoy himself with full satisfaction and delight; not considering, that though his Barns were full, his life was not sure; that God's Pleasure might soon interrupt his Pass-time; that the fearful sentence might presently be pronounced; *Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee, and what thou hast prepared, to whom shall it fall?* Luke 12. 20. *Euripides* calls riches φιλόψυχον χρῆμα *a thing which much endears life*; or makes men greatly love it; but they do not enable at all to keep it: There is no Τιμὴ ἔστι. ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς, *no* price, or *ransome equivalent to life*; *all that a man hath, he would give* to redeem it, but it is a purchase too dear for all the riches in Psal 49. the World to compass; so the *Psalmist* tells us, *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransome for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious*: They cannot redeem their Brother's soul, or life; nor therefore their own; for all souls are of the same value, all greatly surpass the price of gold and silver. Life was not given us for Luke 12. 20. perpetuity, but lent, or deposited with us; And without delay or evasion it must be resigned into the hand of its just Owner, when he shall please to demand it; and although righteousness may, *yet riches* (as the *Wiseman* tells us) Prov. 11. 4. *cannot deliver from death, nor at all profit us in the day of wrath.* Could we probably retain our Possessions, for ever in our hands; nay, could we certainly foresee some considerable long definite time, in which we might enjoy our stores, it were perhaps somewhat excusable to scrape and hoard, it might look like rational Providence, it might yield some valuable satisfaction; but since, *Rape, congere, aufer, posside, statim relinquendum est*; since, as *Solomon* tells us, *Riches are not for ever, nor doth the* Prov. 27. 24. *crown endure to every generation*; yea, since they must be left very soon, nor is there any certainty of keeping them any time; that one day may consume them; one night may dispossess us of them; and our life together with them, there can be no reason why we should be solicitous about them; no accompt given of our setting so high a rate upon them. For who would much regard the having custody of a rich treasure for a day or two, then to be stripped of all, and left bare? To be to day invested in large demains, and to morrow to be dispossessed of them? No Man surely would be so fond, as much to affect the condition. Yet this Sen. *Ep.* 98. is our case; whatever we call ours, we are but guardians thereof for a few days. This consideration therefore may serve to repress, or moderate in us all covetous desires, proud conceits, vain confidences and satisfactions in respect to worldly Wealth, to induce us (in *Job*'s language) Job 31. 24. *not to make gold our hope, nor to say to the fine gold, thou art my confidence; not to rejoyce because our wealth is great, and because our hand hath gotten much*; to extirpate from our hearts that root of all evil, the love of Money. For if, as the *Preacher* thought, the greatest pleasure or benefit accruing from them, is but looking upon them for a while, (*what good*, saith he, Eccl. 5. 11. *is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?*) if a little will, nay must suffice our natural appetites, and our present necessi-

ties

ties; if more than needs, is but (as the Scripture teaches us) *a trouble* Eccl. 5. 12. disquieting our minds with care; *a* dangerous *snare*, drawing us into mis- 1 Tim. 6. 9. chief and sorrow; if this, I say, be their present quality; and were it better, yet could it last for any certain, or any long continuance, is it not evidently better to enjoy that pittance God hath allotted us with ease and contentation of mind; or if we want a necessary supply, to employ only a moderate diligence in getting thereof by the fairest means, which with God's blessing promised thereto, will never fail to procure a competence, and with this to rest content; than with those in *Amos*, *to pant after the dust of the earth*; *to lade our selves with thick clay*; to thirst insatiably after floods of gold, to heap up mountains of treasure, to extend unmeasurably our possessions, (*joining house to house, and laying field to field, till there be no place, that we may be placed alone in the midst of the earth*; as the Prophet *Esay* doth excellently describe the covetous Man's humour) than, I say, thus incessantly to toil for the maintenance of this frail body, this flitting breath of ours? If Divine Bounty hath freely imparted a plentiful estate upon us, we should indeed bless God for it; *making our selves friends* Luke 16. 9. thereby (as our *Saviour* advises us) employing it to God's Praise and Service; to the relief and comfort of our Brethren that need; but to seek it earnestly, to set our heart upon it, to relye thereon; to be greatly pleased or elevated in mind thereby, as it argues much infidelity and prophaneness of heart, so it signifies much inconsiderateness and folly, the ignorance of its nature, the forgetfulness of our own condition, upon the grounds discoursed upon.

Simplici curæ constant necessaria, in delicias laboratur. Sen. Ep. 89. Matt. 6. Heb. 13. 15. 1 Tim. 6. 8. Psal. 55. 26. Amos 2. 6. Hab. 2. 6. Isa. 5. 8.

3. Now, in the next place; for Pleasure, that great Witch, which so enchants the World, and which by its mischievous Baits so allures Mankind into sin and misery; although this consideration be not altogether necessary to disparage it (its own nature sufficing to that; for it is more transitory than the shortest life, it dyes in the very enjoyment) yet it may conduce to our wise and good practice in respect thereto, by tempering the sweetness thereof, yea souring its relish to us; minding us of its insufficiency and unserviceableness to the felicity of a mortal creature; yea, its extreamly dangerous consequences to a soul, that must survive the short enjoyment thereof. Some Persons indeed, ignorant or incredulous of a future estate; presuming of no sense remaining after death, nor regarding any accompt to be rendred of this life's actions, have encouraged themselves, and others in the free enjoyment of present sensualities, upon the score of our life's shortness and uncertainty; inculcating such *Maxims* as these:

——*Brevis est hic fructus homullis*; ——*post mortem nulla voluptas.*

Let us eat and drink for to morrow we shall dye; because our life is short, let us make the most advantageous use thereof we can; because death is uncertain, let us prevent its surprisal, and be beforehand with it, enjoying somewhat, before it snatches all from us. The Authour of *Wisedom* observeth, and thus represents these Mens discourse: *Our life is short and tedious; and in the death of a man there is no remedy; neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave:* ——*Come on, therefore let us enjoy the good things that are present; let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth; Let us fill our selves with costly wine and ointments; and let no flower of the spring pass by us, let us crown our selves with rose-buds before they be withered; let none of us go without his part of voluptuousness* ——*for this is our portion, and our lot*

Quem fors dierum cunque dabit, lucro Appone, nec dulces amores Sperne puer, &c. Hor. l. 9.

1 Cor. 15. 32.

Sap. 2. 1, &c.

is this. Thus, and no wonder, have some men conceiving themselves beasts, resolved to live as such; renouncing all sober care becoming men, and drowning their reason in brutish sensualities; yet no question, the very same reflexion, that this life would soon pass away, and that death might speedily attack them, did not a little quash their mirth, and damp their pleasure. To think, that this perhaps might be the last Banquet they should taste of; that they should themselves shortly become the feast of Worms and Serpents; could not but somewhat spoil the gust of their highest delicacies, and disturb the sport of their loudest jovialties; but
Job 20. 14. in *Job*'s expression, *make the meat in their bowels to turn, and be as the gall of Asps within them.* Those customary enjoyments did so enamour them of sensual delight, that they could not without pungent regret imagine a necessity of soon for ever parting with them; and so their very Pleasure was by this thought made distastful and embittered to them. So did the *Wiseman* observe: *O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions; unto the man that hath nothing to vex him; and that hath prosperity in all things; Ye* (adds he) *unto him, that is*
Eccles 41. 1. *yet able to receive meat*: And how bitter then must the remembrance thereof be to him, who walloweth in all kind of corporal satisfaction and delight; that placeth all his happiness in sensual enjoyment? However, as to us, who are better instructed and effected; who know and believe a future state; the consideration, that the time of enjoying these delights
Eccles. 7. 6. will soon be over; that this World's jollity is but like *the crackling of thorns under a pot* (which yields a brisk sound, and a chearful blaze, but heats little, and instantly passes away) that they leave no good fruits behind them, but do onely corrupt and enervate our minds; war against, and hurt our souls; tempt us to sin, and involve us in guilt; that therefore *Solomon* was surely in the right, when he said of *laughter*, that *it is mad,*
Eccl. 2. 2. *and of mirth, what doeth it?* (that is, that the highest of these delights are very irrational impertinences) and of intemperance; that, at the
Prov. 23. 32. last, *it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder*; with us, I say,
Heb. 11. 25. who reflect thus, that (πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν) *enjoyment of sinful pleasure for a season cannot* obtain much esteem and love; but will rather, I hope, be despised and abhorred by us. I will add onely

Δοκεῖ γὰρ ἡ σοφία θαυμαστὰς ἡδονὰς ἔχειν καθαριότητι, καὶ τῷ βεβαίῳ Arist. Eth. X. 7.

4. Concerning secular Wisdom and Knowledge; the which Men do also commonly with great earnestness and ambition seek after, as the most specious ornament, and pure content of their mind; this consideration doth also detect the just value thereof; so as to allay intemperate ardour toward it, pride and conceitedness upon the having or seeming to have it, envy and emulation about it. For, imagine, if you please, a Man accomplished with all varieties of learning commendable, able to recompt all the stories, that have been ever written (or the deeds acted) since the World's beginning; to understand, or with the most delightful fluency and elegancy to speak all the languages, that have at any time been in use among the sons of men; skilful in twisting and untwisting all kinds of subtilties; versed in all sorts of natural experiments, and ready to assign plausible conjectures about the causes of them; studied in all Books whatever, and in all Monuments of Antiquity; deeply knowing in all the mysteries of art, or science, or policy, such as have ever been devised by humane wit, or study or observation; yet all this, such is the pity, he must be forced presently to abandon; all the use he could make of all his notions, the pleasure he might find in them, the reputation accruing

cruing to him from them must at that fatal minute vanish; *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisedom in the grave, whither he goeth.* 'Tis seen (saith the *Psalmist*, seen indeed every day, and observed by all) *that wise men die; likewise the fool and brutish person perisheth; one event happeneth to them both; there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever*; (both dye alike, both alike are forgotten) as the wisest man himself, did (not without some distast) observe and complain. All our subtile conceits, and nice criticisms; all our fine inventions and goodly speculations shall be swallowed up either in the utter darkness, or in the clearer light of the future state. One Potion of that *Lethean* cup (which we must all take down upon our entrance into that *Land of forgetfulness*) will probably drown the memory, deface the shape of all those *Ideas*, with which we have here stuffed our minds; however they are not like to be of use to us in that new, so different, state; where none of our languages are spoken; none of our experience will sute; where all things have quite another face unknown, unthought of by us. Where *Aristotle*, and *Varro* shall appear mere Idiots; *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* shall become very infants; the wisest and eloquentest *Greeks* will prove senseless and dumb *Barbarians*; where all our Authours shall have no authority; where we must all go forth to school again; must unlearn perhaps, what in these misty regions we thought our selves best to know; and begin to learn, what we not once ever dream'd of; Doth therefore, I pray you, so transitory and fruitless a good (for it self I mean and excepting our duty to God, or the reasonable diligence we are bound to use in our calling) deserve such anxious desire; or so restless toil; so careful attention of mind, or assiduous pain of body about it? Doth it become us to contend, or emulate so much about it? Above all do we not most unreasonably, and against the nature of the thing it self we pretend to (that is ignorantly and foolishly) if we are proud and conceited, much value our selves or contemn others, in respect thereto? *Solomon* the most experienced in this matter, and best able to judge thereof (He that gave his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that had been done under Heaven, and this with extream success; even he) passeth the same sentence of vanity, vexation and unprofitableness, upon this, as upon all other subcelestial things. True, he commends wisdom as an excellent and useful thing comparatively; *exceeding folly, so far as light exceedeth darkness*; But since light it self is not permanent, but must give way to darkness; the difference soon vanished; and his opinion thereof abated; considering, that as it happened to the fool, so it happened to him, he breaks into that expostulation: *And why then was I more wise?* to what purpose was such a distinction made, that signified in effect so little? And indeed the Testimony of this great personage may serve for a good *Epilogue* to all this discourse, discovering sufficiently the slender worth of all earthly things: seeing he, that had given himself industriously to experiment the worth of all things here below, to sound the depth of their utmost perfection and use; who had all the advantages imaginable of performing it; Who flourished in the greatest magnificences of worldly pomp and power; who enjoyed an incredible affluence of all riches; who tasted all varieties of most exquisite pleasure; whose heart was (by God's special gift, and by his own industrious care) enlarged with all kind of knowledge (furnished

Pſal. 46. 4. Eccl. 9. 10.

Pſal. 49. 10. Eccl. 2. 14, 15, &c.

Pſal. 88. 12.

Τῶν δ' Ἰσοκράτες διατριβῶν ἐπισκώπτων, γηρᾷν φησι παρ' αὐτῷ τὰς μαθητὰς, ὡς ἐν ἄδῃ χρησομένους τοῖς τέχναις, καὶ δίκας ἐρεῖντας. Cato Sen. *apud* Plut. *pag.* 641.

Διπλῆν δρᾶσιν οἱ μωδόντες γεάμματα. Eccl. 2. 15.

1 Kings 4. 29. with notions many *as the Sand upon the Sea ſhore)* above all that were before him; who had poſſeſſed and enjoyed all that fancy could conceive, or heart could wiſh, and had arrived to the top of ſecular Happineſs; Yet even *He* with pathetical reiteration pronounces all to be *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; altogether unprofitable and unſatisfactory to the mind of Man. And ſo therefore we may juſtly conclude them to be; ſo finiſhing the firſt grand advantage this preſent conſideration affordeth us in order to that wiſedom, to which we ſhould apply our hearts.

I ſhould proceed to gather other good fruits, which it is apt to produce and contribute to the ſame purpoſe; but ſince my thoughts have taken ſo large ſcope upon that former head, ſo that I have already too much, I fear, exerciſed your patience, I ſhall only mention the reſt. As this conſideration doth, as we have ſeen, Firſt, diſpoſe us rightly to value theſe temporal goods, and moderate our affections about them; ſo it doth, Secondly, in like manner, conduce to the right eſtimation of temporal evils; and thereby to the well tempering our paſſions in the reſentment of them; to the begetting of patience and contentedneſs in our minds. Alſo, Thirdly, it may help us to value, and excite us to regard thoſe things (good or evil) which relate to our future ſtate; being the things only of a permanent nature, and of an everlaſting conſequence to us. Fourthly, It will engage us to husband carefully, and well employ this ſhort time of our preſent life: Not to defer or procraſtinate our endeavours to live well; not to be lazy and loitering in the diſpatch of our only conſiderable buſineſs, relating to eternity; to embrace all opportunities, and improve all means; and follow the beſt *compendiums* of good practice leading to eternal bliſs. Fifthly, It will be apt to confer much toward the begetting and preſerving ſincerity in our thoughts, words and actions; cauſing us to decline all oblique deſigns upon preſent mean intereſts, or baſe regards to the opinions or affections of men; bearing ſingle reſpects to our conſcience and duty in our actions; Teaching us to ſpeak as we mean; and be what we would ſeem; to be in our hearts and in our cloſets, what we appear in our outward expreſſions and converſations with Men; For conſidering, that within a very ſhort time all the thoughts of our hearts ſhall be diſcloſed; and all the actions of our lives expoſed to publick view (being ſtrictly to be examined at the great bar of divine judgment before Angels and Men) we cannot but perceive it to be the greateſt folly in the World, for this ſhort preſent time to diſguiſe ourſelves; to conceal our intentions, or ſmother our actions. What hath occurred (upon theſe important ſubjects) to my meditation, I muſt at preſent, in regard to your patience, omit. I ſhall cloſe all with that good *Collect* of our Church.

Almighty God, give us grace, that we may caſt away the works of darkneſs, and put upon us the armour of light now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jeſus Chriſt came to viſit us in great humility; that in the laſt day, when he ſhall come again in his glorious Majeſty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may riſe to the life immortal, through him, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, now and ever. Amen.

SER-

SERMON XV.

The Conſideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſedom.

IN diſcourſing formerly upon theſe words (expounded according to the moſt common and paſſable interpretation) that which I chiefly obſerved was this: That the ſerious conſideration of the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life is a fit mean or rational inſtrument ſubſervient to the bringing our hearts to wiſedom; that is, to the making us diſcern, attend unto, embrace, and proſecute ſuch things, as according to the dictates of right reaſon are truly beſt for us.

Job 14. 14. *All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

I. The truth of which obſervation I largely declared from hence, that the ſaid conſideration diſpoſeth us to judge rightly about thoſe goods (which ordinarily court and tempt us, *viz.* worldly glory and honour; riches, pleaſure, knowledge; to which I might have added wit, ſtrength and beauty) what their juſt worth and value is; and conſequently to moderate our affections, our cares, our endeavours about them; for that if all thoſe goods be uncertain and tranſitory, there can be no great reaſon to prize them much, or to affect them vehemently, or to ſpend much care and pains about them.

II. I ſhall next in the ſame ſcales weigh our temporal evils; and ſay, that alſo, The conſideration of our lives brevity and frailty doth avail to the paſſing a true judgment of, and conſequently to the governing our paſſions, and ordering our behaviour in reſpect to all thoſe temporal evils, which either according to the Law of our nature, or the fortuitous courſe of things, or the particular diſpenſation of providence do befal us. Upon the declaration of which point I need not inſiſt much, ſince what was before diſcourſed concerning the oppoſite goods doth plainly enough infer it; more immediately indeed in regard to the *mala damni*, or *privationis* (the evils, which conſiſt onely in the want, or loſs of temporal goods) but ſufficiently alſo by a manifeſt parity of reaſon in reſpect to the *mala paſſa*, the real pains, croſſes and inconveniences, that aſſail us in this life. For if worldly glory do hence appear to be no more than a tranſient blaze, a fading ſhew, a hollow ſound, a piece of theatrical pageantry, the

the want thereof cannot be very conſiderable to us. Obſcurity of condition (living in a valley beneath that dangerous height, and deceitful luſtre) cannot in reaſon be deemed a very ſad or pitiful thing; which ſhould diſpleaſe, or diſcompoſe us; if we may thence learn that abundant wealth is rather a needleſs clog, or a perillous ſnare, than any great convenience to us; we cannot well eſteem to be poor a great infelicity, or to undergo loſſes a grievous calamity; but rather a benefit to be free from the diſtractions that attend it; to have little to keep for others, little to care for our ſelves. If theſe preſent pleaſures be diſcerned hence to be only wild fugitive dreams; out of which being ſoon rouſed we ſhall only find better regrets to abide; why ſhould not the wanting opportunities of enjoying them be rather accompted a happy advantage, than any part of miſery to us? If it ſeem, that the greateſt perfection of curious knowledge (of what uſe or ornament ſoever) after it is hardly purchaſed, muſt ſoon be parted with; to be ſimple or ignorant will be no great matter of lamentation: as thoſe will appear no ſolid goods, ſo theſe conſequently muſt be
Sen. *Ep* 89. onely *umbræ malorum*, phantaſms, or ſhadows of evil, rather than truly or ſubſtantially ſo; (evils created by fancy and ſubſiſting thereby; which reaſon ſhould, and time will ſurely remove.) That in being impatient or diſconſolate for them, we are but like children, that fret and wail for the want of petty toys. And for the more real or poſitive evils ſuch as violently aſſault nature, whoſe impreſſions no reaſon can ſo withſtand, as to diſtinguiſh all diſtaſt or afflictive ſenſe of them; yet this conſideration will aid to abate and aſſwage them; affording a certain hope and proſpect of approaching redreſs. It is often ſeen at Sea, that Men (from unacquaintance with ſuch agitations, or from brackiſh ſtreams ariſing from the ſalt Water) are heartily ſick, and diſcover themſelves to be ſo by apparently grievous ſymptomes; yet no man hardly there doth mind or pity them, becauſe the malady is not ſuppoſed dangerous, and within a while will probably of it ſelf paſs over; or that however, the remedy is not far off; the ſight of Land, a taſt of the freſh air will relieve them: 'Tis near our Caſe: We paſſing over this troubleſome Sea of life; from unexperience, joined with the tenderneſs of our conſtitution, we cannot well endure the changes and croſſes of fortune; to be toſs'd up and down; to ſuck in the ſharp vapours of penury, diſgrace, ſickneſs, and the like, doth beget a qualm in our ſtomachs; make us nauſeate all things, and appear ſorely diſtempered; yet is not our condition ſo diſmal, as it ſeems; we may grow hardier, and wear out our ſenſe of affliction; however, the Land is not far off, and by diſembarking hence we ſhall ſuddenly be diſcharged of all our moleſtations. 'Tis a common ſolace of grief, approved by wiſe men, *ſi gravis, brevis eſt*; *ſi longus, levis*; if it be very grievous and acute, it cannot continue long, without intermiſſion or reſpit; if it abide long, it is ſupportable; intolerable pain is like lightening, it deſtroys us, or is it ſelf inſtantly deſtroyed. However, death at length (which never is far off) will free us; be we never ſo much toſſed with ſtorms of misfortune, that is a ſure haven; be we perſecuted with never ſo many enemies, that is a ſafe refuge; let what pains or diſeaſes ſoever infeſt us, that is an aſſured *Anodynon*, and infallible remedy for them all; however we be wearied with the labours of the day, the night will come and eaſe us; the grave will become a bed of reſt unto us.

Θάρσει πόνε· τὸ ἄκρον ἐκ τέχει χρόνον.

Τὸ μὲν ἀφόρητον ἐξάγει· τὸ δὲ χρονίζον φορητόν. Ant. *VII. Sect.* 33.

Summi doloris intentio invenit finem: nemo poteſt valde dolere, & diu: ſic nos amantiſſima noſtri natura diſpoſuit, ut dolorem aut tolerabilem, aut brevem faceret. Sen. *Ep.* 24.

Dolore perculſi mortem impleramus, eamque unam, ut miſeriarum malorumque terminum, exoptamus. Cic. *conſ.*

Moriar? hoc dicis; deſinam ægrotare poſſe, &c. Sen.

us. Shall I dye? I shall then cease to be sick; I shall be exempted from disgrace; I shall be enlarged from prison; I shall be no more pinched with want; no more tormented with pain. Death is a Winter, that as it withers the Rose and Lilly, so it kills the Nettle and Thistle; as it stifles all worldly joy and pleasure, so it suppresses all care and grief; as it hushes the voice of mirth and melody, so it stills the clamours, and the sighs of misery; as it defaces all the World's glory, so it covers all disgrace, wipes off all tears, silences all complaint, buries all disquiet and discontent. King *Philip* of *Macedon* once threatened the *Spartans* to vex them sorely, and bring them into great straits; but, answered they, *can he hinder us from dying*; that indeed is a way of evading, which no enemy can obstruct, no Tyrant can debar Men from; they who can deprive of life, and its conveniences, cannot take away death from them. There is a place, *Job* tells us, *where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary be at rest; where the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressour; the small and great are there; and the servant is free from his Master.* 'Tis therefore but holding out a while, and a deliverance from the worst this World can molest us with, shall of its own accord arrive unto us: in the mean time 'tis better that we at present owe the benefit of our comfort to reason, than afterward to time; by rational consideration to work patience and contentment in our selves; and to use the shortness of our life as an argument to sustain us in our affliction, than to find the end thereof onely a natural and necessary means of our rescue from it. The contemplation of this cannot fail to yield something of courage and solace to us in the greatest pressures; these transient, and short-liv'd evils, if we consider them as so, cannot appear such horrid bugbears, as much to affright or dismay us; if we remember how short they are, we cannot esteem them so great, or so intolerable. There be, I must confess, divers more noble considerations, proper and available to cure discontent and impatience. The considering, that all these evils proceed from God's just will, and wise providence; unto which it is fit, and we upon all accompts are obliged readily to submit; that they do ordinarily come from God's goodness, and gracious design toward us; that they are medicines (although ungrateful, yet wholsome) administred by the Divine Wisdom to prevent, remove or abate our distempers of soul (to allay the tumours of pride, to cool the fevers of intemperate desire; to rouse us from the lethargy of sloath; to stop the gangrene of bad conscience) that they are fatherly corrections intended to reclaim us from sin, and excite us to duty; that they serve as instruments or occasions to exercise, to try, to refine our vertue; to beget in us the hope, to qualify us for the reception of better rewards; such discourses indeed are of a better nature, and have a more excellent kind of efficacy; yet no fit help, no good art, no fit weapon is to be quite neglected in the combat against our spiritual foes. A Pebble-stone hath been sometimes found more convenient than a Sword or a Spear to slay a Giant. Baser remedies (by reason of the patient's constitution, or circumstances) do sometime produce good effect, when others in their own nature more rich and potent want efficacy. And surely frequent reflexions upon our mortality, and living under the sense of our lives frailty cannot but conduce somewhat to the begetting in us an indifferency of mind toward all these temporal occurrents; to extenuate both the goods and the evils we here meet with; consequently therefore to compose and calm our passions about them.

"Ἀδύνατον ἔχειν βοηθὸν, ὃ τρέμω σκιάς. *Eripere vitam nemo non homini potest; At nemo mortem.* Sen. *Trag.* Job 3. 17.

Ὁ μέλλεις τοῦ χρόνου χαλεπώτερον τοῦτο χαλεπώτερον λόγῳ Plut. *ad Apol. p.* 195.

Omnia brevia tolerabilia esse debent, etiamsi magna. Cic. *Læl. ad fin.*

III. But

III. But I proceed to another uſe of that conſideration we ſpeak of emergent from the former, but ſo as to improve it to higher purpoſes. For ſince it is uſeful to the diminiſhing our admiration of theſe worldly things, to the withdrawing our affections from them, to the ſlackning our endeavours about them; it will follow that it muſt conduce alſo to beget an eſteem, a deſire, a proſecution of things conducing to our future welfare; both by removing the obſtacles of doing ſo, and by engaging us to conſider the importance of thoſe things in compariſon with theſe. By removing obſtacles I ſay; for while our hearts are poſſeſſed with regard and paſſion toward theſe preſent things, there can be no room left in them for reſpect and affection toward things future. 'Tis in our ſoul as in the reſt of nature; there can be no penetration of objects (as it were) in our hearts, nor any vacuity in them; our mind no more than our body can be in ſeveral places, or tend ſeveral ways, or abide in perfect reſt; yet ſomewhere it will always be; ſome-whither it will always go; ſome-what it will ever be doing. If we *have a treaſure* here (ſome-what we greatly like and much confide in) *our hearts will be here* with it; and if here, they cannot be otherwhere; they will be taken up; they will reſt ſatisfied; they will not care to ſeek farther. If we affect worldly glory and delight in the applauſe of men, we ſhall not be ſo careful to pleaſe God, and ſeek his favour. If we admire and repoſe confidence in riches, it will make us neglectful of God, and diſtruſtful of his Providence; if our mind thirſts after, and ſucks in greedily ſenſual pleaſures, we ſhall not reliſh ſpiritual delights, attending the practice of vertue and piety, or ariſing from good conſcience; adhering to, attending upon Maſters of ſo different, ſo oppoſite a quality is inconſiſtent; they cannot abide peaceably together, they cannot both rule in our narrow breaſts; we ſhall love and hold to the one; hate and deſpiſe the other. *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*; the love of the World, as the preſent gueſt, ſo occupies and fills the room; that it will not admit, cannot hold the love of God. But when the heart is diſcharged and emptied of theſe things; when we begin to deſpiſe them as baſe and vain; to diſtaſt them as inſipid and unſavoury; then naturally will ſucceed a deſire after other things promiſing a more ſolid content; and deſire will breed endeavour; and endeavour (furthered by God's aſſiſtance always ready to back it) will yeild ſuch a glimps and taſte of thoſe things, as will ſo comfort and ſatisfie our minds, that thereby they will be drawn and engaged into a more earneſt proſecution of them. When (I ſay) driving on ambitious Projects, heaping up Wealth, providing for the fleſh (by our reflecting on the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life) become ſo inſipid to us, that we find little appetite to them, or reliſh in them; our reſtleſs minds will begin to hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, deſiring ſome ſatisfaction thence: Diſcerning theſe ſecular and carnal fruitions to be meer *huſks* (the proper food of ſwine) we ſhall bethink our ſelves of that better nouriſhment (of rational or ſpiritual comfort) which our Fathers houſe doth afford to his children and ſervants. Being ſomewhat diſentangled from the care of our farms and our trafficks; from yoaking our oxen and being married to our preſent delights; we may be at leaſure, and in diſpoſition to comply with divine invitations to entertainment ſpiritual. Experiencing, that our trade about theſe petty commodities turns to ſmall accompt, and that in the end we ſhall be nothing richer thereby; reaſon will induce us with the Merchant in the Goſpel *to ſell all that we have* (to forego our preſent intereſts and deſigns) for the purchaſing that *rich Pearl* of God's Kingdom,

Matt. 6. 21.
John 5. 44. 12. 43. Mat. 6. 24.
Rom. 8. 5.
1 John 2. 15.
Luke 22. 5.
Matt. 22. 5.
Matt. 13. 46.

dom, which will yield ſo exceeding profit; the gain of preſent comfort to our conſcience, and eternal happineſs to our ſouls. In fine, when we conſider ſeriouſly, that *we have here no abiding City*, but are onely *ſojourners and pilgrims upon Earth*; that all our care and pain here do regard only an uncertain and tranſitory ſtate; and will therefore ſuddenly as to all fruit and benefit be loſt unto us; this will ſuggeſt unto us, with the good Patriarchs, ὀρέγεσθαι κρείττονος, *to long after a better Countrey*; a more aſſured, and laſting ſtate of life; where we may enjoy ſome certain and durable repoſe; to tend homeward, in our deſires and hopes, toward thoſe eternal manſions of joy and reſt prepared for God's faithful ſervants in Heaven. Thus will this conſideration help toward the bringing us to inquire after and regard the things concerning our future ſtate; and in the reſult will engage us to compare them with theſe preſent things, as to our concernment in them and the conſequence of them to our advantage or damage, whence a right judgment, and a congruous practice will naturally follow. There be four ways of comparing the things relating to this preſent life with thoſe which reſpect our future ſtate: Comparing the goods of this with the goods of that; the evils of this with the evils of that; the goods of this with the evils of that; the evils of this with the goods of that. All theſe compariſons we may find often made in Scripture; in order to the informing our judgment about the reſpective value of both ſorts; the preſent conſideration intervening, as a ſtandard to meaſure and try them by.

Heb. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11.

Heb. 11. 16.

First then; comparing the preſent goods with thoſe which concern our future ſtate, ſince the tranſitorineſs and uncertainty of temporal goods deduct from their worth, and render them in great degree contemptible; but the durability and certainty of ſpiritual goods doth encreaſe their rate, and make them exceedingly valuable; 'tis evident hence, that ſpiritual goods are infinitely to be preferred in our opinion, to be more willingly embraced, to be more zealouſly purſued than temporal goods, that, in caſe of competition, when both cannot be enjoyed, we are in reaſon obliged readily to part with all theſe, rather than to forfeit our title unto, or hazard our hope of thoſe. Thus in the Scripture it is often diſcourſed: *The world* (ſaith St. *John*) *paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof; but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever*: The World, and all that is deſirable therein is tranſient; but obedience to God's commandments is of an everlaſting conſequence; whence he infers, that we ſhould *not love the world*; that is, not entertain ſuch an affection thereto, as may any way prejudice the love of God, or hinder the obedience ſpringing thence, or ſuitable thereto.

1 John 2. 17.

All fleſh is graſs (ſaith St. *Peter*) *and all the glory of man as the flower of graſs; the graſs withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; But the word of the Lord endureth for ever*: All worldly glory is frail and fading, but the Word of God is eternally firm and permanent; that is, the good things by God promiſed to them, who faithfully ſerve him, ſhall infallibly be conferred on them to their everlaſting benefit; whence it follows, that as he exhorts, we are bound to gird up the loins of our mind, to be ſober, and hope to the end; to proceed and perſiſt conſtantly in faithful obedience to God. *Charge thoſe* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *who are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God; that they do good, be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate; treaſuring up for themſelves a good foundation for the future; that they may attain everlaſting life*: Since, argues he, preſent riches are of

1 Pet. 1. 24.

v. 13.

1 Tim. 6. 18.

uncertain, and short continuance; but faith and obedience to God, exercised in our charity and mercy toward men, are a certain stock improveable to our eternal interest; therefore be not proud of, nor relye upon those, but regard especially, and employ our selves upon these. Our Saviour himself doth often insist upon, and inculcate this comparison: Treasure not unto your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt; and where thieves break through and steal; but treasure up to your selves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Do not take care for your soul, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink; nor for your body, what ye shall put on; but seek first the kingdom of God. Labour not for the food that perisheth, but for the food that abideth to eternal life; sell your substance, and give alms; provide your selves bags that wax not old; an indefectible treasure in the heavens: Thus doth the Holy Scripture, setting forth the uncertainty and transitorines of the present, the certainty and permanency of future goods, declare the excellency of these above those; advising thereupon, with highest reason, that we willingly reject those (in real effect, if need be, however always in ready disposition of mind) in order to the procuring or securing of these. It also, for our example and encouragement, commends to us the wisdom and vertue of those Persons, who have effectually practised this duty; of *Abraham, our Father*, who, in expectation of that well-founded City, made and built by God, did readily desert his Countrey and Kindred, with all present accommodations of life; of *Moses*, who disregarded the splendours and delights of a great Court; rejected the alliance of a great Princess, and *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*; in respect to the μισθαποδοσια, that future distribution of reward; a share wherein shall assuredly fall to them, who above all other considerations regard the performance of their duty to God; of the *Apostles*, who *forsook all* Parents, Brethren, Lands, Houses, Trades, receits of Custome, to follow *Christ*; him at present poor, and naked of all secular honour, power, wealth and delight; in hope onely to receive from him divine benefits, and future preferments in his Kingdom; of *Mary*, who neglecting present affairs, and seating her self at *Jesus* his feet, attending to his discipline; is commended for her wisdom, in minding the *only necessary thing*; in chusing *the better part, which could never be taken from her*: of St *Paul*, who *accompted all his gains* (all his worldly interests and priviledges) *to be damage*, to be *dung in respect to Christ, and the excellent knowledge of him*, with the benefits thence accruing to him. On the contrary there we have *Esau* condemned and stigmatized for *a profane* and a vain *person*, who (ἀντὶ μιᾶς βρώσεως) *for one little eating-bout*; one mess of Pottage (for a little present satisfaction of sense, or for the sustenance of this frail life) did withgo his birthright, that embleme of spiritual blessings and priviledges. We have again represented to us that unhappy young *Gentleman*; who, though he had good qualities, rendring him amiable even to our Saviour; and had been trained up in the observance of God's Commandments; yet not being content to part with his large Possessions, in lieu of the treasure by *Christ* offered in Heaven, was reputed deficient; could find no acceptance with God, nor admission into his Kingdom; for a petty temporal commodity forfeiting an infinite eternal advantage. For, saith our Saviour, *He that loveth father or mother above me; he that doth not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yea his own life (for me and the Gospel) is not worthy of me, nor can be my disciple.* He that in his esteem or affection doth prefer any temporal advantages before the benefits

Matt. 6. 20. v. 25. John 6. 27. Luke 12. 33. Θησαυρὸν ἀνέκλειπτον Heb. 11. 10. v. 23. Matt. 19. 27. Luke 18. 28. Luke 10. 39. Phil. 3. 7, 8. Heb. 12. 16. Mark 10. 18. Matt. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26. Mark 10. 29.

benefits tendred by our Saviour (yea doth not in comparison despise, renounce and reject his dearest contents of life, and the very capacity of enjoying them, his life it self) doth not deserve to be reckoned among the Disciples of *Christ*; to be so much as a Pretender to eternal joy, or a candidate of immortality. Our *Saviour* rejects all such unwise and perverse traders, who will not exchange brittle glass for solid gold; counterfeit glistering stones for genuine most precious jewels; a garland of fading flowers for an incorruptible crown of Glory; a small temporary pension for a vastly rich freehold; *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens.* Thus doth the Holy Scripture teach us to compare these sorts of good things; 1 Pet. 1. 4.

And, secondly, so also doth it to compare the evils of both states; for that seeing, as the soon ceasing of temporal mischiefs should (in reasonable proceeding) diminish the fear of them, and mitigate the grief for them; so the incessant continuance of spiritual evils doth (according to just estimation) render them hugely grievous and formidable; 'tis plain, that we should much more dislike, abominate, and shun spiritual evils, than temporal; that we should make no question rather to endure these paroxysms of momentany pain, than incur those chronical and (indeed) incurable maladies; that we should run willingly into these shallow plashes of present inconvenience, rather than plunge our selves into those unfathomable depths of eternal misery. There is (I suppose) no man, who would not accompt it a very great calamity (such as hardly greater could befal him here) to have *his right eye plucked out*, and *his right hand cut off*, and *his foot* taken from him; to be deformed and maimed, so that he can do nothing, or stir any whither; yet our Lord represents these to us as inconsiderable evils, yea as things very eligible and advantageous in comparison of those mischiefs, which the voluntary not embracing them, in case we cannot otherwise than by so doing avoid sin, will bring on us: συμφέρει, *it is* (saith he) *profitable for thee, that one of thy members be lost, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell*; καλόν σοι ἐστι, 'tis good, 'tis excellent for thee *to enter into life lame and maimed, and one ey'd, rather than having two hands, and two feet, and two eyes* (in all integrity and beauty of this temporal, or corporal state) *to be cast into eternal fire.* To be banished from ones native soil, secluded from all comforts of friendly acquaintance, devested irrecoverably of great estate and dignity; becoming a vagrant and a servant in vile employment, in a strange Countrey, every Man would be apt to deem a wretched condition; yet *Moses*, we see, freely chose it, rather than by enjoying unlawful pleasures at home, in *Pharaoh*'s Court, to incur God's displeasure and vengeance: συγκακουχεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ ἔχειν, *chusing rather to undergo evil together with God's people, than to have* πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, *a temporary fruition of sinful delight*, dangerous to the welfare of his soul. Death is commonly esteemed the most extream and terrible of evils incident to man; yet our *Saviour* bids us not to regard or fear it, in comparison of that deadly ruine, which we adventure on by offending God: *I say unto you my friends* (saith he, he intended it for the most friendly advice) *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have nothing farther to do; but I will shew you whom ye shall fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell*, to cast both body and soul into Hell, and destroy them therein; *Yea, I say unto you* (so he inculcates and impresses it upon them) *fear him.* Heb. 11. 25. Luke 12. 4. Matt. 10. 28. Ἀποκτεῖναι δύνανται, βαλεῖν οὐ δύ.

But thirdly; Considering the good things of this life together with the evils of that, which is to come; Since enjoying these goods in compa-

rison with enduring those evils is but rejoicing for a moment in respect of mourning to eternity; if upon the seeming sweetness of these enjoyments to our carnal appetite be consequent a remediless distempering of our soul; so that what tasts like honey proves gall in the digestion; gripes our bowels, gnaws our heart, and stings our conscience for ever; if present mirth and jollity have a tendency to that dreadful weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth threatned in the Gospel; if for the praise and favour of a few giddy men here we venture eternal shame and confusion before God and Angels and all good men hereafter; if for attaining or preserving a small stock of uncertain riches in this World we shall reduce our selves into a state of most uncomfortable nakedness and penury in the other. 'Tis clear as the Sun that we are downright fools and mad men, if we do not upon these accompts rather willingly reject all these good things, than hazard incurring any of those evils; for, saith truth it self,

Mark 8. 36. Luke 9. 25. *What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole World (κ̀ζημιωθ῀ ηπλω ψυχλω) and be endamaged as to his soul,* or lose his soul as a mulct. 'Tis a very disadvantageous bargain for all the conveniencies this World can afford to be deprived of the comforts of our immortal state. But,

Lastly, comparing the evils of this life with the benefits of the future, since the worst tempests of this life will be soon blown over, the bittrest crosses must expire (if not before, however) with our breath; but the good things of the future state are immutable and perpetual; 'tis in evident consequence most reasonable; that we freely (if need be) undertake, and patiently endure these for the sake of those; that in hope of

1 Pet. 1. 4. that *incorruptible inheritance, laid up for us in Heaven,* we not only support and comfort our selves, but even rejoyce and exult in all the afflictions by God's wise and just dispensation imposed on us here; as they in St. *Peter*; wherein (saith he)

Ibid. *ye greatly rejoyce (or exult,) being for a little while as in heavineſs through manifold * afflictions or trials.*

'Αγαλλιᾶσθε ὀλίγον ἄρτι * Πειρασμοῖς.

Accounting it all joy (saith St. *James*) *when ye fall into divers temptations* (that is, afflictions or trials)

Jam. 1. 2. *knowing that the trial of your faith perfecteth patience*; that is, seeing the sufferance of these present evils conduceth to the furtherance

Rom. 5. 8. of your spiritual and eternal welfare. And, *We glory in tribulation,* saith St. *Paul*; rendring the same accompt, because it tended to their souls advantage: St. *Paul*, than whom no man perhaps ever more deeply tasted of the cup of affliction; and that tempered with all the most bitter ingredients which this World can produce; Whose life was spent in continual agitation and unsettledness; in all hardships of travel and labour and care; in extreme sufferance of all pains both of body and mind; in all imaginable dangers and difficulties and distresses, that nature exposes man unto, or humane malice can bring upon him; in all wants of natural comfort (food, sleep, shelter, liberty, health) in all kinds of disgrace and contumely; as you may see in those large inventories of his sufferings,

Ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις.

2 Cor. 11. 23. 6. 5. registred by himself, in the 6th and 11th *Chapters* of his 2d *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*; Yet all this considering the good things he expected afterward to enjoy, he accompted very slight and tolerable: *For* (saith he)

2 Cor. 4. 17. 18. *our lightness of affliction, that is for a little while here, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen; but at those, which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know, that when our earthly house of this tabernacle* (of this unsteady transitory abode) *is dissolved we are to have a tabernacle from God, a house not made with hands, eternal*

Τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως.

Rom. 8. 18. *in the Heavens. I reckon,* saith he again, that is having made a due com-

parison

parison and computation I find) *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy* (that is are not considerable, come under no rate or proportion) *in respect of the glory which shall be revealed* (or openly conferred) *upon us.* The like opinion had those faithful Christians, in the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*, of whom 'tis said, that *being exposed to publick scorn as in the theatre, with reproaches and afflictions, they did with gladness accept the spoiling* * (or rapine) *of their goods; knowing that they had in Heaven a better and more enduring substance.* But the principal example (most obliging our imitation) of this wise choice is that of our *Lord* himself; who, in contemplation of the future great satisfaction and reward of patient submission to the divine will, did willingly undergo the greatest of temporal sorrows and ignominies; *Who* (saith the *Apostle to the Hebrews*, propounding his example to us) *for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.*

Heb. 10. 34. Θεατριζόμενοι * Αρπαγὴν

Heb. 12. 2.

Thus immediately, or by an easie inference doth the consideration of this lifes shortness and uncertainty confer to that main part of wisdom, rightly to value the things about which we are conversant; disposing us consequently to moderate our affections, and rightly to guide our actions about them; fitting us therefore for the performance of those duties so often enjoined us; of not caring for, not trusting in, not minding (unduly that is, and immoderately) things below; of dying to this World, and taking up our cross, or contentedly suffering (in submission to God's will) all loss and inconvenience; as also to the placing our meditation and care; our love and desire; our hope and confidence; our joy and satisfaction; our most earnest pains and endeavours upon things divine, spiritual and eternal.

IV. I proceed to another general benefit of that general consideration; which is that it may engage us to a good improvement of our time; the doing which is a very considerable piece of wisdom. For if time be, (as *Theophrastus* called it truely) *a thing of most precious value* (or expence) as it were a great folly to lavish it away unprofitably; so to be frugal thereof, and careful to lay it out for the best advantage, especially every Man having so little store thereof, must be a special point of Prudence. *To be covetous of time* (*Seneca* tells us) *is a commendable avarice*; it being necessary for the accomplishment of any worthy enterprize; there being nothing exellent, that can soon or easily be effected. Surely he that hath much and great business to dispatch; and but a little time allowed for it, is concerned to husband it well; not to lose it wholly in idleness; not to misse it away in unnecessary divertisements; not to put himself upon other impertinent affairs; above all not to create obstacles to himself, by pursuing matters of a tendency quite contrary to the success of his main undertakings. 'Tis our case; we are obliged here to negotiate in business of infinite price and consequence to us; no less than the salvation of our souls and eternal happiness; and we see, that our time to drive it on and bring it to a happy issue is very scant and short; short in it self; and very short in respect to the nature of those affairs; the great variety, and the great difficulty of them: The great father of *Physicians* did quicken the students of that faculty to diligence, by admonishing them (in the first place, setting it in the front of his famous *Aphorisms*) that, *life is short, and art is long.* And how much more so is the art of living well (that most excellent and most necessary art; for indeed vertue is not a gift of nature, but a work of art; an effect of labour and study) this, I say most

Πολυτελὲς δὲ τὸν ἀνάλωμα.

Nulla nisi temporis honesta est avaritia. Sen.

Non enim dat natura virtutem; ars est bonum fieri. Sen. *Ep.* 89.

moſt needful and uſeful art of living vertuouſly and piouſly; this art of ſpiritual Phyſick; (of preſerving and recovering our ſouls health) how much longer is it? how many rules are to be learnt? how many precepts to be obſerved in order thereto? We are bound to furniſh our minds with needful knowledge of God's will and our duty; we are to bend our unwilling wills to a ready compliance with them; we are to adorn our ſouls with diſpoſitions ſutable to the future ſtate (ſuch as may qualify us for the preſence of God, and converſation with the bleſſed ſpirits above) it is incumbent on us to mortify corrupt deſires, to reſtrain inordinate paſſions, to ſubdue natural propenſities, to extirpate vitious habits; in order to the effecting theſe things, to uſe all fit means; devotion toward God, ſtudy of his Law, reflexion upon our actions, with all ſuch ſpiritual inſtruments; the performing which duties, as it doth require great care and pains, ſo it needs much time; all this is not *dictum factum*, as ſoon done as ſaid; a few ſpare minutes will not ſuffice to accompliſh it. Natural inclination, that wild beaſt within us, will not ſo preſently be tamed, and made tractable by us. Ill habits cannot be removed without much exerciſe and attendance; as they were begot, ſo they muſt be deſtroyed, by a conſtant ſucceſſion, and frequency of acts. Fleſhly luſt is not to be killed with a ſtab or two; it will fight ſtoutly, and rebel often, an hold out long, before with our utmoſt endeavour we can obtain an entire victory over it. No vertue is acquired in an inſtant, but by degrees, ſtep by ſtep; from the ſeeds of right inſtruction and good reſolution it ſprings up, and grows forward by a continual progreſs of cuſtomary practice; 'tis a child of patience, a fruit of perſeverance (that ὑπομονὴ ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ, *enduring in doing well*, St. *Paul* ſpeaks of) and conſequently a work of time, for enduring implies a good ſpace of time. Having therefore ſo much to doe, and of ſo great concernment, and ſo little a portion of time for it, it behoves us to be careful in the improvement of what time is allowed us; to embrace all opportunities and advantages offered; to go the neareſt way, to uſe the beſt *compendiums* in the tranſaction of our buſineſs; not to be ſlothful and negligent, but active and intent about it; (for as time is diminiſhed, and in part loſt by ſloth or ſlackneſs; ſo it is enlarged, and, as it were, multiplied by induſtry; my day is two in reſpect of his, who doeth but half my work.) Not (alſo) to conſume our time in fruitleſs paſtimes, and curious entertainments of fancy; being idly buſie about impertinences and trifles (we call it ſport, but 'tis a ſerious damage to us;) not to immerſe our ſelves in multiplicities of needleſs care about ſecular matters, which may diſtract us, and bereave us of fit leiſure for our great employment; that which our *Saviour* calls περιβάλλεσθαι πρὸς πολλά, *to keep a great deal of doe* and ſtir (to be jumbled about as it were, and confounded) *about many things*; and, περισπᾶσθαι περὶ πολλὴν διακονίαν, *to be diſtracted* and perplexed *about much comberſome ſervice*; which St. *Paul* calls πεπλέχθαι ἐν τοῖς τοῦ βίου πραγματείαις, *to be implicated* and entangled (as in a net) *with the negotiations of this preſent life*; ſo that we ſhall not be expedite, or free to beſtir our ſelves about our more weighty affairs. The ſpending much time about thoſe things doth ſteal it from theſe; yea doth more than ſo, by diſcompoſing our minds ſo that we cannot well employ what time remains upon our ſpiritual concernments. But eſpecially we ſhould not proſtitute our time upon vitious projects and practices; doing which is not onely a prodigality of the preſent time, but an abridgment of the future; it not onely doth not promote or ſet forward our buſineſs, but brings it backward; and makes us more work than we had before;

Τί φθείρει ξένος; ἐναντίον ξένος. Epict.

Rom. 2. 7.

Luke 10. 40.

1 Tim. 2. 4.

'tis

is a going in a way directly contrary to our journeys-end. The Scripture aptly resembles our life to a wayfaring, a condition of travel and pilgrimage; now he that hath a long journey to make, and but a little time of day to pass it in, must in reason strive to set out soon, and then to make good speed; must proceed on directly, making no stops or deflections (not calling in at every sign that invites him, not standing to gaze at every object seeming new or strange to him; not staying to talk with every Passenger that meets him; but rather avoiding all occasions of diversion and delay) lest he be surprised by the night, be left to wander in the dark, be excluded finally from the place whither he tends. So must we in our course towards Heaven and happiness, take care that we set out soon (procrastinating no time, but beginning instantly to insist in the ways of Piety and Vertue) then proceed on speedily, and persist constantly; no where staying or loitering, shunning all impediments and avocations from our Progress; lest we never arrive near, or come too late unto the gate of Heaven. St. *Peter* tells us, that the end of all things doth approach, and thereupon advises us *to be sober, and to watch unto prayer*; for that the less our time is, the more intent and industrious it concerns us to be. And, St. *Paul* injoins us to *redeem the time, because the days are evil*; that is, since we can enjoy no true quiet or comfort here, we should improve our time to the best advantage for the future; he might have also adjoined, with the Patriarch *Jacob*, the paucity of the days to their badness; because *the days of our life are few and evil*, let us redeem the time; *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble*: So few indeed they are, that 'tis fit we should lose none of them, but use them all in preparation toward that great change we are to make; that fatal passage out of this strait time into that boundless eternity. So, it seems, we have *Job*'s example of doing: *All the days* (says he) *of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* I end this Point with that so comprehensive warning of our Saviour: *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Watch ye therefore and pray that ye may be counted worthy to escape —— and to stand before the son of man.*

1 Pet. 4. 7.
Eph. 5. 15.
Gen. 47. 9.
Job 14. 1.
Job 14. 14.
Luke 21. 34.

V. I shall adjoin but one use more, to which this consideration may be subservient, which is, that it may help to beget and maintain in us (that which is the very heart and soul of all goodness) Sincerity. Sincerity in all kinds, in our thoughts, words and actions. To keep us from harbouring in our breasts such thoughts, as we would be afraid or ashamed to own: from speaking otherwise than we mean, than we intend to doe, than we are ready any-where openly to avow; from endeavouring to seem what we are not; from being one thing in our expressions and conversations with men; another in our hearts, or in our closets. From acting with oblique respects to private interests or passions, to humane favour or censure (in matters, I mean, where duty doth intervene, and where pure conscience ought to guide and govern us) from making professions and ostentations (void of substance, of truth, of knowledge, of good purpose) great semblances of peculiar sanctimony, integrity, scrupulosity, spirituality, refinedness, like those *Pharisees* so often therefore noted in the Gospel; as also from palliating, as those men did, designs of ambition, avarice, envy, animosity, revenge, perverse humour, with pretences of zeal and conscience. We should indeed strive to be good

(and

(and that in all real ſtrictneſs, aiming at utmoſt perfection) in outward act, and appearance, as well as in heart and reality; for the glory of God and example of men (*providing things honeſt in the ſight of all men*) but we muſt not ſhine with a falſe luſtre, nor care to ſeem better than we are, nor intend to ſerve our ſelves in ſeeming to ſerve God; bartering ſpiritual commodities for our own glory or gain. For ſince the day approaches when *God will judge τὰ κρυπτὰ ἀνθρώπων, the things men do ſo ſtudiouſly conceal*; when *God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil*; ſince *we muſt all appear* (or rather be all made apparent, be manifeſted and diſcovered) *at the tribunal of Chriſt*: ſince *there is nothing covered, which ſhall not be revealed, nor hid that ſhall not be known; ſo that whatever is ſpoken in the ear in cloſets, ſhall be proclaimed on the houſe tops*: Since at length, and that within a very ſhort time (no man knows how ſoon) the whiſpers of every mouth (the cloſeſt murmurs of detraction, ſlander and ſychophantry) ſhall become audible to every ear; the abſtruſeſt thoughts of all hearts (the cloſeſt malice and envy) ſhall be diſcloſed in the moſt publick Theatre before innumerable ſpectatours; the truth of all pretences ſhall be throughly examined; the juſt merit of every Perſon, and every cauſe ſhall with a moſt exact ſcrutiny be ſcann'd openly in the face of all the World; to what purpoſe can it be to juggle or baffle for a time; for a few days (perhaps for a few minutes) to abuſe, or to amuſe thoſe about us with crafty diſſimulation or deceit? Is it worth the pains to deviſe plauſible ſhifts, which ſhall inſtantly, we know, be detected and defeated; to bedaub foul deſigns with a fair yarniſh, which death will preſently wipe off; to be dark and cloudy in our proceedings, when as a clear day (that will certainly diſpel all darkneſs and ſcatter all miſts) is breaking in upon us; to make vizors for our faces, and cloaks for our actions, whenas we muſt very ſhortly be expoſed, perfectly naked and undiſguiſed, in our true colours, to the general view of Angels and Men? Heaven ſees at preſent what we think and doe, and our conſcience cannot be wholly ignorant or inſenſible; nor can Earth it ſelf be long unacquainted therewith. Is it not much better, and more eaſie (ſince it requires no pains or ſtudy) to act our ſelves, than to accommodate our ſelves to other unbeſeeming and undue parts; to be upright in our intentions, conſiſtent in our diſcourſes, plain in our dealings, following the ſingle and uniform guidance of our reaſon and conſcience, than to ſhuffle and ſhift, wandring after the various uncertain and inconſtant opinions or humours of men? What matter is it, what cloaths we wear, what garb we appear in, during this poſture of travel and ſojourning here; what for the preſent we go for; how men eſteem us, what they think of our actions? St. *Paul* at leaſt did not much ſtand upon it; for *with me*, ſaid he, *'tis a very ſmall thing* (ἐλάχιστον, the leaſt thing that can come under conſideration) *to be judged of you, or of humane day* (that is, of this preſent tranſitory, fallible, reverſible judgment of men.) If we mean well and do righteouſly our conſcience will at preſent ſatisfie us, and the divine (unerring and impartial) ſentence will hereafter acquit us; no unjuſt or uncharitable cenſure ſhall prejudice us; if we entertain baſe deſigns, and deal unrighteouſly; as our conſcience will accuſe and vex us here, ſo God will ſhortly condemn and puniſh us; neither ſhall the moſt favourable conceit of men ſtand us in ſtead. *Every man's work ſhall become manifeſt; for the day ſhall declare it; becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire; and the fire* (that is, a ſevere and ſtrict inquiry) *ſhall try every man's work, of what ſort it is.* I cannot

Rom. 12. 17.

Rom. 2. 16.

Eccl. 12. 14.

2 Cor. 5. 10.

Οὐ γὰρ πεφανερῶσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπλῶς δεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ φανερωθῆναι. Chryſoſt.

Luke 12. 2, 3.

1 Cor. 4. 3.

1 Cor. 3. 13.

inſiſt

inſiſt more on this Point; I ſhall onely ſay, that conſidering the brevity and uncertainty of our preſent ſtate, the greateſt ſimplicity may juſtly be deemed the trueſt wiſdom; that who deceives others doth cozen himſelf moſt; that the deepeſt policy (uſed to compaſs, or to conceal bad deſigns) will in the end appear the moſt downright folly.

I might add to the precedent diſcourſes, that *Philoſophy* it ſelf hath commended this conſideration as a proper and powerful inſtrument of vertue; reckoning the practice thereof a main part of wiſdom; the greateſt proficient therein in common eſteem, *Socrates*, having defined Philoſophy (or the ſtudy of wiſdom) to be nothing elſe, but (μελέτη θανάτου) *the ſtudy of death*; intimating alſo (in *Plato*'s *Phædon*) that this ſtudy, the meditation of death and preparation of his mind to leave this World, had been the conſtant and chief employment of his life. That likewiſe, according to experience, nothing more avails to render the minds of men ſober and well compoſed, than ſuch ſpectacles of Mortality, as do impreſs this conſideration upon them. For whom doth not the ſight of a Coffin or of a Grave gaping to receive a friend perhaps, or an ancient Aquaintance; however a man in nature and ſtate altogether like our ſelves; of the mournful looks and habits, of all the ſad pomps and ſolemnities attending man unto his long home, by minding him of his own frail condition, affect with ſome ſerious, ſome honeſt, ſome wiſe thoughts? And if we be reaſonable men we may every day ſupply the need of ſuch occaſions, by repreſenting to our ſelves the neceſſity of our ſoon returning to the duſt; dreſſing in thought our own Herſes, and celebrating our own Funerals; by living under the continual apprehenſion and ſenſe of our tranſitory and uncertain condition; dying daily, or becoming already dead unto this World. The doing which effectually being the gift of God, and an eſpecial work of his Grace, let us of him humbly implore it, ſaying after the Holy *Prophet*, *Lord, ſo teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſedom.* Amen.

Τοῦτο ἔχει ἡ τελειότης τῆς ἤθους τὸ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ὡς τελευταίαν διεξάγειν. Anton. *lib.* 7.

SERMON XVI.

The Danger and miſchief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

THIS Pſalm (no leſs excellent in vertue, than large in bulk) containeth manifold reflexions upon the nature, the properties, the adjuncts and effects of God's Law, many ſprightly ejaculations about it (conceived in different forms of ſpeech; ſome in way of

petition, ſome of thanksgiving, ſome of reſolution, ſome of aſſertion or aphoriſm) many uſefull directions, many zealous exhortations to the obſervance of it; the which are not ranged in any ſtrict order, but, (like a variety of fair flowers and wholſome herbs in a wide field) do with a grateful confuſion lie diſperſed, as they freely did ſpring up in the heart, or were ſuggeſted by the devout ſpirit of him, who indited the *Pſalm*; whence no coherence of ſentences being deſigned, we may conſider any one of them abſolutely or ſingly by it ſelf,

Among them, that which I have picked out for the ſubject of my diſcourſe, implieth an excellent rule of practice, authoriſed by the *Pſalmiſt*'s example; it is propounded in way of devotion or immediate addreſs to God; unto whoſe infallible knowledge his conſcience maketh an appeal concerning his practice; not as boaſting thereof, but as praiſing God for it, unto whoſe gratious inſtruction and ſuccour he frequently doth aſcribe all his performances: But the manner of propounding I ſhall not inſiſt upon; the rule it ſelf is, that ſpeedily, without any procraſtination or delay, we ſhould apply our ſelves to the obſervance of God's Commandments; the practice of which rule it ſhall be my endeavour to recommend and preſs.

It is a common practice of men, that are engaged in bad courſes, which their own conſcience diſcerneth and diſapproveth, to adjourn the reformation of their lives to a farther time, ſo indulging themſelves in the preſent commiſſion of ſin, that yet they would ſeem to purpoſe, and promiſe themſelves hereafter to repent, and take up: Few reſolve to perſiſt finally in an evil way, or deſpair of being one day reclaimed, but immediately and effectually to ſet upon it, many deem unſeaſonable or needleſs; it will, they preſume, be ſoon enough to begin to morrow or next day, a month or a year hence, when they ſhall find more commodious opportunity, or ſhall prove better diſpoſed thereto; in the mean time with *Solomon*'s ſluggard, *Yet*, ſay they, *a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands*; let us but neglect this duty, let us but ſatisfie this appetite, let us but enjoy this bout of pleaſure; hereafter God willing we mean to be more careful, we hope that we ſhall become more ſober: So like bad debtours: when our conſcience dunneth us, we always mean, we always promiſe to pay; if ſhe will ſtay a while, ſhe ſhall, we tell her, be ſatisfied; or like vain ſpendthrifts, we ſee our eſtate fly, yet preſume that it will hold out, and at length we ſhall reſerve enough for our uſe. Εἰς αὖθις τὰ σπουδαῖα, *Let ſerious buſineſs ſtay till the morrow*, was a ſaying that coſt dear to him who ſaid it; yet we in our greateſt concerns follow him.

Recognoſce ſingulos, conſidera univerſos, nullius non vitæ ſpectat in craſtinum; non enim vivunt, ſed victuri ſunt. Sen Ep. 45.

Victuros agimus ſemper, nec vivimus unquam. Manil. 4.

Prov. 6. 10.

Plut. *in* Pelop.

But how fallacious, how dangerous and how miſchievous this manner of proceeding is; how much better and more adviſable it is, after the example propounded in our Text, ſpeedily to betake our ſelves unto the diſcharge of our debt and duty to God, the following conſiderations will plainly declare.

Non eſt crede mihi ſapientis dicere, vivam. Mart. *I.* 16.

1. We may conſider, that the obſervance of God's Commandments (an obſervance of them proceeding from an habitual diſpoſition of mind, in a conſtant tenour of practice) is our indiſpenſable duty, our main concernment, our only way to happineſs; the neceſſary condition of our attaining ſalvation; that alone which can procure God's love and favour toward us; that unto which all real bleſſings here, and all bliſs hereafter are inſeparably annexed: *Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man*; (the whole duty, the whole deſign, the whole perfe-

Eccl. 12. 13.

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ction, the ſum of our wiſdom, and our happineſs.) *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: The righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs, his countenance doth behold the upright; God will render to every man according to his works*; theſe are Oracles indubitably clear, and infallibly certain; theſe are immoveable terms of juſtice between God and Man, (which never will, never can be relaxed; being grounded on the immutable nature of God, and eternal reaſon of things; if God had not decreed, if he had not ſaid theſe things, they would not aſſuredly be true; for it is a foul contradiction to reaſon, that a Man ever ſhould pleaſe God without obeying him; 'tis a groſs abſurdity in nature, that a Man ſhould be happy without being good; wherefore all the wit in the World cannot deviſe a way, all the authority upon Earth (yea, I dare ſay, even in Heaven it ſelf) cannot eſtabliſh a condition, beſide faithful obſervance of God's Law, that can ſave, or make us happy; from it there can be no valid diſpenſation, without it there can be no effectual abſolution, for it there can be no acceptable commutation; nor in defect thereof will any faith, any profeſſion, any trick or pretence whatever avail, or ſignify any thing. Whatever expedient to ſupply its room ſuperſtition, miſtake, craft, or preſumption may recommend, we ſhall, relying thereon, be certainly deluded: If therefore we mean to be ſaved (and are we ſo wild as not to mean it?) if we do not renounce felicity (and do we not then renounce our wits?) to become vertuous, to proceed in a courſe of obedience, is a work that neceſſarily muſt be performed; and why then ſhould we not inſtantly undertake it; wherefore do we demur or ſtick at it; how can we at all reſt quiet, while an affair of ſo vaſt importance lieth upon our hands, or until our mind be freed of all uncertainty and ſuſpence about it? Were a probable way ſuggeſted to us of acquiring great wealth, honour or pleaſure, ſhould we not quickly run about it, could we contentedly ſleep, till we had brought the buſineſs to a ſure or hopeleſs iſſue? and why with leſs expedition or urgency ſhould we purſue the certain means of our preſent ſecurity and comfort, of our final ſalvation and happineſs? in doing ſo, are we not ſtrangely inconſiſtent with our ſelves?

Matt. 19. 27. Pſal. 11. 7. Prov. 15. 9. Rom. 2. 6. Mat. 5. 18. Luke 16. 17. Pſal. 119. 15.

Again, diſobedience is the certain road to perdition; that which involveth us in guilt and condemnation, that which provoketh God's wrath and hatred againſt us, that which aſſuredly will throw us into a ſtate of eternal ſorrow and wretchedneſs: *The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in God's ſight, he hateth all the workers of iniquity*; *If ye do not repent, ye ſhall periſh. The wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, and all the people that forget God*; *The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*; *The wicked ſhall go into everlaſting puniſhment*, theſe are denunciations no leſs ſure than ſevere, from that mouth, which is never opened in vain; from the execution whereof there can be no ſhelter or refuge; And what wiſe man, what man in his right ſenſes would for one minute ſtand obnoxious to them? Who that any wiſe tendereth his own welfare would move one ſtep forward in ſo perillous and deſtructive a courſe? the farther in which he proceedeth, the more he diſcoſteth from happineſs, the nearer he approacheth to ruine.

Pſal. 5. 5. Luke 13. 3. Pſal. 9. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Matt. 25. 46. 7. 21.

In other caſes common ſenſe prompteth men to proceed otherwiſe; for who, having rendred one his enemy, that far overmatcheth him, and at whoſe mercy he ſtandeth, will not inſtantly ſue to be reconciled? who being ſeiſed by a pernicious diſeaſe, will not haſte to ſeek a cure? who being fallen into the jaws of a terrible danger, will not nimbly leap out thence? and ſuch plainly is our caſe; while we perſiſt in ſin, we live in enmity and defiance with the Almighty, who can at his Pleaſure cruſh us;

we lie under a fatal plague, which, if we do not ſeaſonably repent, will certainly deſtroy us; we incur the moſt dreadful of all hazards, abiding in the confines of death and deſtruction; God frowning at us, guilt holding us, Hell gaping for us: Every Sinner is (according to the *Wiſe-man's* expreſſion) *as he that lieth down in the midſt of the ſea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a maſt*; and he that is in ſuch a caſe, is he not mad or ſenſeleſs, if he will not forthwith labour to ſwim out thence, or make all ſpeed to get down into a ſafer place? can any man with comfort lodge in a condition ſo diſmally tickliſh?

Prov. 23. 34.

2. We may conſider, that in order to our final welfare we have much work to diſpatch, the which requireth as earneſt care and painful induſtry, ſo a competent long time; which, if we do not preſently fall on, may be wanting, and thence our work be left undone, or imperfect: To conquer and correct bad inclinations, to render our ſenſual appetites obſequious to reaſon, to compoſe our paſſions into a right and ſteady order, to cleanſe our ſouls from vanity, from perverſeneſs, from ſloth, from all vitious diſtempers, and in their room to implant firm habits of vertue; to get a clear knowledge of our duty, with a ready diſpoſition to perform it; in fine, to ſeaſon our minds with holy affections, qualifying us for the preſence of God, and converſation with the bleſſed Spirits above; theſe are things that muſt be done, but cannot be done in a trice; it is not *dictum factum*, as ſoon done as ſaid; but ὑπομονὴ ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ, *a patient continuance in well-doing* is needful to atchieve it; for it no time can be redundant, the longeſt life can hardly be ſufficient: *Art is long, and life is ſhort*, may be an Aphoriſm in *Divinity* as well as in *Phyſick*; the art of living well, of preſerving our Soul's health, and curing its diſtempers, requireth no leſs time to compaſs it, than any other Art or Science.

Rom. 2. 7.

Οὐ ῥᾳδιούργιον ἡμῖν χορηγεῖ βοήθειαν ὁ Θεὸς, ἀλλὰ πονουμένοις. Chryſ. *ad* Eph. Λογ. ιγ.

Vertue is not a Muſhrome, that ſpringeth up of it ſelf in one Night, when we are aſleep or regard it not: But a delicate Plant, that groweth ſlowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our untoward ſoil, in this World's unkindly weather; happineſs is a thing too pretious to be purchaſed at an eaſie rate, Heaven is too high to be come at without much climbing; the crown of bliſs is a Prize too noble to be won without a long and a tough conflict. Neither is a vice a ſpirit, that will be conjured down by a charm, or with a *Preſto* driven away; it is not an adverſary, that can be knocked down at a blow, or diſpatched with a ſtab. Whoſoever ſhall pretend at any time eaſily with a celerity, by a kind of *Legerdemain*, or by any miſterious knack, a Man may be ſettled in vertue, or converted from vice, common experience abundantly will confute him; which ſheweth, that a habit otherwiſe (ſetting miracles aſide) cannot be produced or deſtroyed, than by a conſtant exerciſe of acts ſutable or oppoſite thereto; and that ſuch acts cannot be exerciſed without voiding all impediments and framing all Principles of action (ſuch as temper of body, judgment of mind, influence of cuſtome) to a compliance; that who by temper is peeviſh or cholerick, cannot without maſtering that temper become patient or meek; that who from vain opinions is proud, cannot without conſidering away thoſe opinions prove humble; that who by cuſtome is grown intemperate, cannot without weaning himſelf from that cuſtome come to be ſober; that who from the concurrence of a ſorry nature, fond conceits, mean breeding and ſcurvy uſage is covetous; cannot without draining all thoſe ſources of his fault, be turned into liberal. The change of our mind is one of the greateſt alterations in nature, which cannot

O quam iſtud parum putant, quibus tam facile videtur! Quint. 12. 1.

cannot be compaſſed in any way, or within any time we pleaſe; but it muſt proceed on leiſurely and regularly, in ſuch order, by ſuch ſteps, as the nature of things doth permit; it muſt be wrought by a reſolute and laborious perſeverance; by a watchful application of mind in voiding Prejudices, in waiting for advantages, in attending to all we do; by forcible wreſting our nature from its bent, and ſwimming againſt the current of impetuous deſires; by a patient diſentangling our ſelves from practices moſt agreeable and familiar to us; by a wary fencing with temptations, by long ſtruggling with manifold oppoſitions and difficulties; whence the Holy Scripture termeth our practice a warfare, wherein we are to fight many a bloody battel with moſt redoubtable foes; a combat, which muſt be managed with our beſt skill, and utmoſt might; a race, which we muſt paſs through with inceſſant activity and ſwiftneſs.

If therefore we mean to be good or to be happy, it behoveth us to loſe no time; to be preſently up at our great task; to ſnatch all occaſions, to embrace all means incident of reforming our hearts and lives. As thoſe, who have a long journey to go, do take care to ſet out early and in their way make good ſpeed, leſt the night overtake them before they reach their home; ſo it being a great way from hence to Heaven, ſeeing we muſt paſs over ſo many obſtacles, through ſo many Paths of duty before we arrive thither, it is expedient to ſet forward as ſoon as can be, and to proceed with all expedition; the longer we ſtay, the more time we ſhall need, and the leſs we ſhall have.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἰομὲν, ἐπὶ γὰρ μόμβλωκε μάλιστα Ἦμαρ· ἀτὰρ τάχα τοι ποτὶ ἔσσεται ἶρὶν ἔναι. Hom. *Od.* ρ.

3. We may conſider, that no future time which we can fix upon will be more convenient than the preſent is for our reformation. Let us pitch on what time we pleaſe, we ſhall be as unwilling and unfit to begin as we are now; we ſhall find in our ſelves the ſame indiſpoſitions, the ſame averſeneſs, or the ſame liſtleſneſs toward it as now: There will occur the like hardſhips to deter us, and the like Pleaſures to allure us from our duty; objects will then be as preſent and will ſtrike as ſmartly upon our ſenſes; the caſe will appear juſt the ſame, and the ſame Pretences for delay will obtrude themſelves; ſo that we ſhall be as apt then as now to prorogue the buſineſs. We ſhall ſay then, to morrow I will mend; and when that morrow cometh, it will be ſtill to morrow, and ſo the morrow will prove endleſs. If like the ſimple Ruſtick, (who ſtay'd by the River ſide waiting till it had done running, that ſo he might paſs dry-foot over the chanel) we do conceit, that the ſources of ſin (bad inclinations within, and ſtrong temptations abroad) will of themſelves be ſpent or fail, we ſhall find our ſelves deluded. If ever we come to take up, we muſt have a beginning with ſome difficulty and trouble; we muſt courageouſly break through the preſent with all its enchantments; we muſt undauntedly plunge into the cold ſtream; we muſt rouſe our ſelves from our bed of ſloth; we muſt ſhake off that brutiſh improvidence which detaineth us, and why ſhould we not eſſay it now? there is the ſame reaſon now that ever we can have; yea, far more reaſon now; for if that we now begin, hereafter at any determinate time, ſome of the work will be done, what remaineth will be ſhorter and eaſier to us. Nay farther,

Cras hoc fiet; idem cras fiet, &c.
Perſ. *Sat.* 5.

Qui non eſt hodie, cras minus aptus erit.
Ovid. *de Rom. I.* Epiſt. 4. 12.

——*qui recte vivendi prorogat horam,*
Ruſticus expectat dum deſluat amnis, at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.
Hor. *Ep. I.* 2.

Εἰ μὲν λυσιτελὴς ἦν πάρδοσις ἐστιν, ἦν παντελὴς ἀπέσασις ἀυτῆς ὅτι λυσιτελέσει. Epict. 4. 12.
For the ſame reaſon we put it off, we ſhould put it away. If it be good at all, it is good at preſent.

4. We

Παρὰ τὸ σήμερον ἁμαρτὴν εἰς τἄλλα χεῖρον ἀνάγκη σοι τὰ πράγματα ἔχειν Epict. 4. 12.

4. We may conſider, that the more we defer, the more difficult and painful our work muſt needs prove; every day will both enlarge our task, and diminiſh our ability to perform it: Sin is never at a ſtay; if we do not retreat from it, we ſhall advance in it; and the farther on we go, the more we have to come back; every ſtep we take forward, (even before we can return hither, into the ſtate wherein we are at preſent) muſt be repeated; all the web we ſpin muſt be unravelled; we muſt vomit up all we take in; which to do we ſhall find very tedious and grievous.

Vice as it groweth in age, ſo it improveth in ſtature and ſtrength; from a puny Child it ſoon waxeth a luſty Stripling, then riſeth to be a ſturdy Man, and after-a-while becometh a maſſy Giant, whom we ſhall ſcarce dare to encounter, whom we ſhall be very hardly able to vanquiſh; eſpecially ſeeing that as it groweth taller and ſtouter, ſo we ſhall dwindle and prove more impotent; for it feedeth upon our vitals, and thriveth by our decay; it waxeth mighty by ſtripping us of our beſt forces; by enfeebling our reaſon, by perverting our will, by corrupting our temper, by debaſing our courage, by ſeducing all our appetites and paſſions to a treacherous compliance with it ſelf; every day our mind groweth more blind, our will more reſty, our ſpirit more faint, our appetites more fierce, our paſſions more headſtrong and untameable: The power and empire of ſin do ſtrangely by degrees encroach, and continually get ground upon us, till it hath quite ſubdued and enthralled us; firſt we learn to bear it, then we come to like it, by and by we contract a friendſhip with it, then we dote upon it, at laſt we become enſlaved to it in a bondage, which we ſhall hardly be able, or willing to ſhake off; when not onely our necks are fitted to the yoke, our hands are manacled, and our feet ſhackled thereby; but our heads and hearts do conſpire in a baſe ſubmiſſion thereto: When vice hath made ſuch impreſſion on us, when this pernicious weed hath taken ſo deep root in our mind, will and affection, it will demand an extremely toilſome labour to extirpate it.

Falſis opinionibus tanto quiſque inſeritur, quanto magis in eis, familiariuſque volutatur. Aug. *Ep.* 117.

Indeed by continuance in ſin, the chief means (afforded by nature, or by grace) of reſtraining, or reducing us from it, are either cut off, or enervated and rendred ineffectual.

Μέγιστον τοῖς ἀρετὴν βούλημα ἡ αἰδώς, Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.

——*nam quis*
Peccandi finem poſuit ſibi, quando recepit
Ejectum ſemel attrita de fronte ruborem
Juv. *Sat.* 18.

Natural modeſty, while it laſteth, is a curb from doing ill; Men in their firſt deflexions from vertue are baſhful and ſhy; out of regard to other Mens opinion, and tenderneſs of their own honour they are afraid, or aſhamed to tranſgreſs plain rules of duty; but in proceſs this diſpoſition weareth out; by little and little they arrive to that character of the degenerate *Jews*, whom the *Prophets* call *impudent children*, having *a brow of braſs*, and *faces harder than a rock*; ſo that they commit ſin with open face, and in broad day, without any mask, without a bluſh; they deſpiſe their own reputation, and defy all cenſure of others; they outface and outbrave the World, till at length with prodigious inſolence they come to boaſt of wickedneſs, and *glory in their ſhame*, as an inſtance of high courage, and ſpecial gallantry.

Ezek. 2. 4. 3. 7. Iſa. 48. 4. Jer. 5. 3. Prov. 21. 29. Phil. 3. 19.

Conſcience is a check to beginners in ſin, reclaiming them from it, and rating them for it; but this in long ſtanders becometh uſeleſs, either failing to diſcharge its office, or aſſaying it to no purpoſe, having often been ſlighted, it will be weary of chiding; or if it be not wholly dumb, we ſhall be deaf to its reproof: As thoſe who live by cataracts or downfalls of

Ψυχὴ ἄπαξ ἁμαρτίας γυμνωθεῖσα ἡ ἀναλγήτως διατεθεῖσα πολλὴν παρέχει τὴν νοσήματι τῷ πεφθήκοτι, &c. Chryſ. *Tom. Oraſ.* 64.

of Water are by continual noiſe ſo deafened as not to hear or mind it, ſo ſhall we in time grow ſenſeleſs, not regarding the loudeſt Peals and Ratlings of our conſcience.

The Heart of a raw Novice in impiety is ſomewhat tender and ſoft, ſo that remorſe can pierce and ſting it; his neck is yeilding and ſenſible, ſo that the yoke of ſin doth gall it; but in ſtout Proficients the heart becometh hard and ſtony, the neck ſtiff and brawny; (*an iron ſinew*, as the *Prophet* termeth it) ſo that they do not feel or reſent any thing; but are like thoſe of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaketh; ὅτινες ἀπηλγηκότες, who *being paſt feeling all ſorrow or ſmart, have given themſelves over unto laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.* (Ezek. 2. 4. 3. 7. Neh. 9. 29. 2 Chron. 36. 13. Dan. 5. 20.) Iſa. 48. 4. *Quo quis pejus ſe habet, minus ſentit.* Sen. Ep. 53. Eph. 4. 19.

When firſt we nibble at the Bait, or enter into bad courſes, our reaſon doth conteſt and remonſtrate againſt it, faithfully repreſenting to us the folly, the uglineſs, the baſeneſs, the manifold ill conſequences of ſinning; but that by continuance is muffled ſo as not to diſcern, or muzled ſo as not to declare; yea, often is ſo debauched as to excuſe, to avow and maintain, yea, to applaud and extol our miſcarriages.

For a time a Man retaineth ſome courage, and a hope that he may repent; but progreſs in ſin diſpiriteth and caſteth into deſpair; whether God be placable, whether himſelf be corrigible; an apprehenſion concerning the length of the way, or the difficulty of the work diſcourageth, and deſpondency rendreth him heartleſs and careleſs to attempt it. There is no Man that hath heard of God, who hath not at firſt ſome dread of offending him, and ſome diſſatisfaction in tranſgreſſing his will; it appearing to his mind (not yet utterly blinded and depraved) a deſperate thing to brave his irreſiſtible Power, an abſurd thing to thwart his infallible Wiſdom, a deteſtable thing to abuſe his immenſe Goodneſs; but obſtinacy in ſin doth quaſh this conſcientious awe; ſo that at length *God is not in all his thoughts, the fear of God is not before his eyes*; The Wrath of the Almighty ſeemeth a Bugbear, the fierceſt menaces of Religion ſound but as Rattles to him. Pſal. 10. 4. 36. 1.

As for the gentle Whiſpers and Touches of Divine Grace, the monitory Diſpenſations of Providence, the good advices and wholſome reproofs of Friends, with the like means of reclaiming ſinners; theſe to Perſons *ſettled on their lees*, or fixed in bad cuſtome, are but as guſts of Wind bruſhing an old Oak, or as Waves daſhing on a Rock, without at all ſhaking or ſtirring it. Jer. 48. 11. Zeph. 1. 12.

Now when any Perſon is come to this paſs, it muſt be hugely difficult to reduce him; to retrieve a defloured Modeſty, to quicken a jaded Conſcience, to ſupple a callous Heart, to reſettle a baffled Reaſon, to rear a dejected Courage, to recover a Soul miſerably benummed and broken, to its former vigour and integrity, can be no eaſie matter.

The diſeaſes of our Soul no leſs than thoſe of our Body, when once they are inveterate, they are become more incurable; the longer we forbear to apply due remedy, the more hard their cure will prove; if we let them proceed far, we muſt e'er we can be rid of them, undergo a courſe of Phyſick very tedious and offenſive to us; many a rough Purge, many a ſore Phlebotomy, many an irkſome ſweat we muſt endure. Yea farther,

——*fruſtra medicina paratur,*
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.
Ovid.

Ῥᾷον δ' ἀρχῆς μὴ ἐνδῦναι κακίαν, ἢ φεύγουσαν διαφυγεῖν, ἢ φεβαιωσαν ἀνακόψαι. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 26.

5. We may conſider, that by delaying to amend, to do it may become quite impoſſible; it may be ſo in the nature of the thing, it may be ſo by the will of God: The thing may become naturally impoſſible; for vice by

by cuſtom may paſs into nature, and prove ſo congeneal, as if it were born with us; ſo that we ſhall propend to it as a ſtone falleth down, or as a ſpark flieth upward: By ſoaking in Voluptuouſneſs we may be ſo transformed into Brutes, by ſleeping in malice ſo converted into Fiends, that we neceſſarily ſhall act like creatures of that kind, into which we are degenerated; and then in no-wiſe without a downright Miracle are we capable of being reformed. *How long*, ſaith *Solomon*, *wilt thou ſleep, O Sluggard, when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* We may be ſo often called on, and 'tis not eaſie to awaken us, when we are got into a ſpiritual ſlumber; but when we are, *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, ſo that all breath of holy affection is ſtopt, and no ſpiritual pulſe from our heart doth appear; that all ſenſe of duty is loſt, all appetite to good doth fail, no ſtrength or activity to move in a good courſe doth exert it ſelf, that our good complexion is diſſolved, and all our finer ſpirits are diſſipated; that our mind is quite crazed, and all its Powers are ſhattered or ſpoiled, when thus, I ſay, we are ſpiritually dead, how can we raiſe our ſelves, what beneath omnipotency can effect it? as a ſtick, when once 'tis dry and ſtiff, you may break it, but you can never bend it into a ſtreighter poſture, ſo doth the Man become incorrigible, who is ſettled and ſtiffned in vice. The ſtain of habitual ſin may ſink in ſo deep, and ſo throughly tincture all our Soul, that we may be like thoſe People, of whom the *Prophet* ſaith, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may ye do, good, that are accuſtomed to doe evil:* Such an impoſſibility may ariſe from nature; one greater and more inſuperable may come from God.

To an effectual repentance the ſuccour of divine grace is neceſſary; but that is arbitrarily diſpenſed; *the ſpirit bloweth where it liſteth*, yet it liſteth wiſely, with regard both to the paſt behaviour, and preſent capacities of Men; ſo that to ſuch who have abuſed it, and to ſuch who will not treat it well, it ſhall not be imparted: And can we be well aſſured, can we reaſonably hope, that after we by our preſumptuous delays have put off God and dallied with his grace; after that he long in vain hath *waited to be gracious*; after that he hath endured ſo many neglects, and ſo many repulſes from us; after that we frequently have ſlighted his open invitations, and ſmothered his kindly motions in us; in ſhort, after we ſo unworthily have miſuſed his goodneſs and patience, that he farther will vouchſafe his grace to us? when we have forfeited it, when we have rejected it, when we have ſpurned and driven it away, can we hope to recover it?

There is a time, a ſeaſon, a day allotted to us; *our day* it is termed, *a day of ſalvation, the ſeaſon of our viſitation, an acceptable time*; wherein God freely doth exhibit grace, and preſenteth his mercy to us; if we let this day ſlip, *the night cometh when no man can work*; when *the things belonging to our peace will be hidden from our eyes*; when (as the *Prophet* expreſſeth it) we ſhall *grope for the wall like the blind, and ſtumble at noon day as in the night, and be in deſolate places as dead men*; after that day is ſpent, and that comfortable light is ſet, a diſmal night of darkneſs, of cold, of diſconſolateneſs will ſucceed; when God being *weary of bearing* with Men doth utterly deſert them, and *delivereth them over to a reprobate mind*; when ſubtracting his gratious direction and aſſiſtence, *he giveth them over to their own hearts luſts, and to walk in their own counſels*; when they are brought to complain with thoſe in the *Prophet*, *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?* when like *Pharaoh*

Ε'αν δὲ ἐις φρενίτιν ἐκπεσόντες λακτίζωσι καὶ δάκνωσι τὸς βελομένους ἀ παλαίειν τὴν ἀῤῥωστίας αὐτὲς, τότε νοσῶσιν ἀνίατα. Chryſ. *in Babyl. Orat.* 2.

Prov. 6. 9.

Eph. 2. 1. Apoc. 3. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 6.

Frangas citius quam corrigas quæ in pravum induruerunt. Quintil. 1. 3.

Jer. 13. 23.

John. 3. 8.

Τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας. Heb. 10. 29.

Ἀδύνατον. Heb. 6. 4.

Luke 19. 42, 44. 2 Cor. 6. 2. Heb. 3. 13. John. 9. 4. Luke 19. 42. Iſa. 59. 10.

Jer. 15. 6. Mal. 2. 17. Iſ. 1. 14. 7. 13. Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28. Pſal. 81. 12. Iſa. 63. 17.

Pharaoh

Pharaoh they survive only as objects of God's justice, or occasions to glorify his power; when like *Esau*, they cannot find a place of repentance, *although they seek it carefully with tears*; when as to the foolish loitering Virgins, *the door* of mercy is *shut upon them*; when the *master of the house doth rise and shut the door*, &c. when that menace of divine wisedom cometh to be executed; *They shall call upon me, but I will not answer*; *they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me*; *for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord*: And if neglecting our season, and present means, we once fall into this state, then is our case most deplorable; we are dead Men irreversibly doomed, and onely for a few moments reprieved from the stroak of final vengeance; *we are vessels of wrath fitted* (or made up) *for destruction*; by a fatal blindness and obduration sealed up to ruine; we are like the *terra damnata, that earth* (in the *Apostle*) *which drinking up the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bearing thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing*, and *whose end is to be burned*. Wherefore according to the advice of the *Prophet*, *Seek ye the Lord, when he may be found, call ye upon him, while he is near.*

Rom. 9. 17. Heb. 13. 17. Matt. 25. 10. Luke 13. 25. Prov. 1. 28. Rom. 9. 22. Καταρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν. Heb. 6. 7, 8. Isa. 55. 6.

It is true, that God is ever ready upon our true conversion to receive us into favour, that his arms are always open to embrace a sincere Penitent; that he hath declared, *whenever a wicked man turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is right, he shall save his soul alive*; that if *we do wash ourselves, make us clean, put away the evil of our doings, and cease to do evil*, then *although our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be like crimson they shall be as wool*; that if we *rend our hearts, and turn unto the Lord, he is gratious and merciful, and will repent of the evil*; that *God is good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon him*; that whenever a prodigal son with humble confession and hearty contrition for his sin doth *arise and go to his father*, he will embrace him tenderly, and entertain him kindly; that even a profane Apostate, and a bloody Oppressour (as *Manasses*) a lewd Strumpet (as *Magdalene*) a notable Thief (as he upon the Cross) a timorous Renouncer (as St. *Peter*) a furious Persecutor (as St. *Paul*) a stupid Idolater (as all the *Heathen* World, when the *Gospel* came to them, was) the most heinous Sinner that ever hath been, or can be imagined to be, if he be disposed to repent, is capable of mercy; those declarations and promises are infallibly true, those instances peremptorily do evince, that repentance is never superannuated; that if we can turn at all, we shall not turn too late; that *panitentia nunquam sera, modo seria*, is an irrefragable rule; yet nevertheless delay is very unsafe; for what assurance can we have, that God hereafter will enable us to perform those conditions of bewailing our sins, and forsaking them? have we not cause rather to fear that he will chastise our presumption by with-holding his Grace? for although God faileth not to yield competent aids to Persons who have not *despised his goodness and long-suffering that leadeth them to repentance*; yet he that wilfully or wantonly loitereth away the time, and squandereth the means allowed him; who refuseth to come when God calleth, yea woeth and courteth him to repentance, how can he pretend to find such favour?

Isa. 1. 18. Joel 2. 13. Psal. 86. 5. Luke 15. 18. *Vid.* Chrys. *ad* Theod. 2. *Judas* (saith he there) was capable of pardon. Rom. 2. 4.

We might add, that supposing God in superabundance of mercy might be presumed never to with-hold his grace; yet seeing his grace doth not work by irresistible compulsion; seeing the worse qualified we are, the more apt we shall be to cross and defeat its operation; seeing that we cannot hope that hereafter we shall be more fit than now to comply with it: Yea seeing we may be sure, that after our hearts are hardned by per-

ſeverance in ſin, we ſhall be more indiſpoſed thereto; we by delay of repentance do not only venture the forfeiture of divine grace, but the danger of abuſing it, which heinouſly will aggravate our guilt, and hugely augment our puniſhment.

We ſhould do well therefore moſt ſeriouſly to regard the *Apoſtle's* admonition; *Exhort one another to day, while it is called to day, leſt any of you be hardened by the deceitfulneſs of ſin:* Now that we find our ſelves invited to repent, now that we apprehend ſo much reaſon for it; now that we feel our hearts ſomewhat enclined thereto; now that we have time in our hands, and are not barr'd from hopes of mercy; now that it is not extremely difficult, or not abſolutely impoſſible, let us in God's name lay hold on the occaſion, let us ſpeedily and earneſtly ſet upon the work. Farther yet,

Heb. 3. 13.

6. We ſhould conſider, that we are mortal and frail, and thence any deſigns of future reformation may be clipt off, or intercepted by death; which is always creeping toward us, and may for all we can tell be very near at hand. You ſay you will repent to morrow; but are you ſure you ſhall have a morrow to repent in? have you an hour in your hand, or one minute at your diſpoſal? have you a leaſe to ſhew for any term of life; can you claim or reckon upon the leaſt portion of time without his leave, who beſtoweth life, and dealeth out time, and ordereth all things as he pleaſeth? Can you any wiſe deſcry the juſt *meaſure of your days*, or *the bounds of your appointed time* without a ſpecial revelation from him, *in whoſe hands is your breath*; and *with whom* alone *the number of your months is* regiſtred? *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth*, ſaith the *Wiſe-man:* boaſt not of it, that is, do not pretend it to be at thy diſpoſal, preſume not upon any thing that may befal therein; for whilſt thou preſumeſt thereon, may it not be ſaid unto thee, as to the rich Projectour in the *Goſpel*, * *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee.* Doth not, ſecluding hidden decrees, every Man's life hang upon a thread very ſlender and frail? is it not ſubject to many diſeaſes lurking within, and to a thouſand accidents flying about us? how many, that might have promiſed themſelves as fair ſcope as we can, have been unexpectedly ſnapt away? How many have been cropt in the flower of their age and vigour of their ſtrength? Doth not every day preſent experiments of ſudden death? Do we not continually ſee that obſervation of the *Preacher* verified, *Man knoweth not his time; as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds are caught in the ſnare, ſo are the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it cometh ſuddenly upon them?* Old men are ready to drop of themſelves, and young men are eaſily bruſhed or ſhaken down; the former viſibly ſtand upon the brink of Eternity, the latter walk upon a bottomleſs Quag, into which unawares they may ſlump; who then can anywiſe be ſecure? We are all therefore highly concerned to uſe our life, while we have it; to catch the firſt opportunity, leſt all opportunity forſake us; to cut off our ſinning, leſt our ſelves be cut off before it: And that the rather, becauſe by laviſhing, or miſemploying our preſent time, we may loſe the future, provoking God to bereave us of it; for as prolongation of time is a reward of Piety; as to obſervance of the Commandments it is promiſed, *Length of days, and long life, and peace ſhall be added unto thee*; ſo being immaturely ſnatched hence is the puniſhment awarded

Qui pœnitenti veniam ſpoſpondit, peccanti craſtinum diem non promiſit. Greg. *in Evang. Hom. IX.*

Job 12. 10. 14. 5. 7. 1. Pſal. 39. 4. 90. 12. Dan. 5. 23. Prov. 27. 1.

Οὐκ οἶδας τι τέξεται ἡ ὅτι ἔσται· μὴ ἀπαγγέλῃ τὰ μὴ σά. Baſ. M. *exh. ad Bapt.*

* Luke 12. 10.

Eccles 9. 12.

Τί γὰρ οἶδας ἄνθρωπε ἁμαρτίους, εἰ ἡμέρας ζήσεις ἐν τῷδε τῷ βίῳ, ἵνα ᾖ μετανοήσῃς, &c.

Ὅπου δὲ δηλονότι ἡ ἔξοδος οὐκ ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἀναδέχει, ἢ ἐν ἁμαρτίᾳ τελευτήσαντι μετάνοια οὐκ ἔστι, &c. Conſt. Ap. 2. 13.

Prov. 3. 2.

awarded to impious practice; ſo it is threatned that *Evil men ſhall be cut off*; Pſal. 37. 9.
that *bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their days*; that *God will* Pſal. 55. 23.
wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goeth on Pſal. 68. 21.
ſtill in his wickedneſs: the very being unmindful of their duty is the cauſe,
why men are thus ſurpriſed; for, *If*, ſaith God, *thou doſt not watch, I* Rev. 3. 3.
ſhall come upon thee as a thief, and thou ſhalt not know when I come upon thee. 16. 5.
And *If* (ſaith our Lord) *that ſervant doth ſay in his heart, my Lord delay-*
eth his coming, &c. *The Lord of that ſervant will come in a day, when he look-* Luke 12. 45.
eth not for him, &c. 46.

If then it be certain, that we muſt render a ſtrict accompt of all our doings here; if by reaſon of our frail nature and ſlippery ſtate, it be uncertain when we ſhall be ſummoned thereto; if our negligence may abridge and accelerate the term, is it not very reaſonable to obſerve thoſe advices of our Lord; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour, when* Matt. 25. 13.
the ſon of man cometh; *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your heart be* 24. 42.
overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life, and ſo Mark 13. 33.
that day come upon you unawares. Let your loins be girded about, and your Luke 12. 15, 35.
lamps burning, and ye your ſelves like men, that wait for your Lord: And to
take the counſel of the *Wiſe-man*, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord,* Eccluſ 5. 7.
and put not off from day to day; for ſuddenly ſhall the wrath of the Lord come
forth, and in thy ſecurity ſhalt thou be deſtroyed, and periſh in the day of ven-
geance.

Theſe conſiderations plainly do ſhew how very fooliſh, how extremely dangerous and deſtructive the procraſtinating our reformation of life is: there are ſome others of good moment, which we ſhall reſerve.

SERMON XVII.

The Danger and miſchief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

I Proceed to the Conſiderations which yet remain to be ſpoken to.

1. We may conſider the cauſes of delay in this caſe (as in all caſes of moment) to be bad and unworthy of a Man: What can they be but either ſtupidity, that we do not apprehend the importance of the affair; or improvidence that we do not attend to the danger of perſiſting in ſin; or negligence that we do not mind our concernments; or ſloth that

Αργίας περίφασις ἢ ἀναβολή, Simpl.

keepeth us from rowſing and beſtirring our ſelves in purſuance of what appeareth expedient; or faint-heartedneſs and cowardice, that we dare not attempt to croſs our appetite, or our fancy? all which diſpoſitions are very baſe and ſhameful: It is the prerogative of humane nature to be ſagacious in eſtimating the worth, and provident in deſcrying the conſequences of things; whereas other creatures, by impulſe of ſence, do onely fix their regard on preſent appearances; which peculiar excellency by ſtupidity and improvidence we forfeit, degenerating into brutes; and negligence of that, which we diſcern mainly to concern us is a quality ſomewhat beneath thoſe, depreſſing us below beaſts, which cannot be charged with ſuch a fault; ſloth is no leſs deſpicable, rendring a man fit for nothing; nor is there any thing commonly more reproachful than want of courage: ſo bad are the cauſes of delay.

Animal hoc providum, ſagax, Cic. *de leg.* 1. Cic. *de offic.* 1.

2. And the effects are no leſs unhappy, being diſappointment, damage, trouble and ſorrow: As expedition (catching advantages and opportunities, keeping the ſpirit up in its heat and vigour, making forcible impreſſions where-ever it lighteth, driving on the current of ſucceſs) doth ſubdue buſineſs, and atchieve great exploits (as by practiſing his Motto, *to defer nothing*, *Alexander* did accompliſh thoſe mighty feats which make ſuch a clatter in ſtory; and *Caeſar* more by the rapid quickneſs and forwardneſs of undertaking, than by the greatneſs of courage, and skilfulneſs of conduct, did work out thoſe enterpriſes, which purchaſed to his Name ſo much glory and renown) ſo delay and ſlowneſs do ſpoil all buſineſs, do keep off ſucceſs at diſtance from us, thereby opportunity is loſt, and advantages ſlip away; our courage doth flag, and our ſpirit languiſheth; our endeavours ſtrike faintly, and are eaſily repelled; whence diſappointment neceſſarily doth ſpring, attended with vexation.

Μηδὲν ἀναβαλλόμενος. *Succeſſus urgere ſuos, inſtare, &c.* Luc. 1.

Pleriſque in rebus tarditas & procraſtinatio odioſa eſt. Cic. *Philip.* 6.

Αἰεὶ δ' ἀμβολιερὸς ἀνὴρ ἄτῃσι παλαίει. Heſ.

Dum deliberamus quando incipiendum eſt, incipere jam ſerum eſt. Quint. 12. 7.

3. Again, we may conſider, that to ſet upon our duty is a great ſtep toward the performance of it; if we can reſolve well, and a little puſh forward, we are in a fair way to diſpatch; *to begin* (they ſay) *is to have half done*; to ſet out, is a good part of the journey; to riſe betimes, is oftner harder than to doe all the day's work; entring the Town, is almoſt the ſame with taking it; it is ſo in all buſineſs, it is chiefly ſo in moral practice: For if we can find in our hearts to take our leave of ſin, if we can diſengage our ſelves from the witcheries of preſent allurement; if we can but get over the threſhold, of vertuous converſation, we ſhall find the reſt beyond expectation ſmooth and expedite; we ſhall diſcover ſuch beauty in vertue, we ſhall taſt ſo much ſweetneſs in obedience as greatly will encourage us to proceed therein.

Dimidium facti qui cœpit habet. Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Μόνον ἀρχὴ ὅλης τῆς πράγματος, *&c.* Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Orat. p.* 68.

Τὸ δυσχερὲς καὶ δυσκατόρθωτον τοῦτο ἔχει, τὸ δυνηθῆναι ὅπλα λαβεῖν τὸ εἰσάπαξ καὶ τὴν πρώτην ὁδὸν τῆς μετανοίας. *Ib. p.* 79.

Honeſtas, quæ principio anxia habetur, ubi contigerit, voluptati luxuriæque habetur. Vict. *in* Sept. Sev.

4. Again, we may conſider, that our time it ſelf is a gift, or a talent committed to us, for the improvement whereof we are reſponſible no leſs than for our Wealth, our Power, our Credit, our Parts, and other ſuch advantages, wherewith for the ſerving of God, and furthering our own ſalvation we are inſtructed: *To redeem the time* is a Precept; and of all Precepts the moſt neceſſary to be obſerved, for that without redeeming (that is embracing and well employing) time we can do nothing well; no good action can be performed, no good reward can be procured by us: Well may we be adviſed to take our beſt care in husbanding it, ſeeing juſtly of all

Eph. 5. 16. Col. 4. 5.

all things it may be reckoned moſt pretious; its price being ineſtimable, and its loſs irreparable; for all the World cannot purchaſe one Moment of it more than is allowed us, neither can it, when once gone, by any means be recovered: So much indeed as we ſave thereof, ſo much we preſerve of our ſelves; and ſo far as we loſe it, ſo far in effect we ſlay our ſelves, or deprive our ſelves of life; yea by miſpending it we do worſe than ſo; for a dead ſleep, or a ceſſation from being, is not ſo bad as doing ill; all that while we live backward, or decline toward a ſtate much worſe than annihilation it ſelf. Farther Πολυτελέσατον ἀνάλωμα.

5. Conſider, that of all time the preſent is ever the beſt for the purpoſe of amending our life: It is the onely ſure time, that which we have in our hands, and may call our own; whereas the paſt time is irrevocably gone from us; and the future may never come to us: It is abſolutely (reckoning from our becoming ſenſible of things, and accomptable for our actions) the beſt, as to our capacity of improving it; *Omnia quæ ventura ſunt in incerto jacent, protinus vive.* Sen. *de vit. brev.* 9.

Optima quæque dies miſeris mortalibus ævi
Prima fugit. Verg. *Georg.* 3.

Our beſt days do firſt paſs away, was truly ſaid; the nearer to its ſource our life is, the purer it is from ſtain, the freer from clogs, the more ſuſceptive of good impreſſions, the more vivid and brisk in its activity; the farther we go on, eſpecially in a bad courſe, the nearer we verge to the dregs of our life; the more dry, the more ſtiff, the more ſluggiſh we grow, delay therefore doth ever ſteal away the flower of our age, leaving us the bran and refuſe thereof. Again,

6. If at any time we do reflect upon the time that hath already ſlipped away unprofitably from us, it will ſeem more than enough, and (if we conſider well) it will be grievous to us to loſe more; the morrow will ſeem too late to commence a good life; ἀρκετὸς ὁ παρελήλυθὼς χρόνος, *The time paſt of our life* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*, or to have continued in ill courſes; more indeed it might than ſuffice; it ſhould be abundantly too much to have imbezilled ſo large a portion of our pretious and irreparable time: After we have ſlept in neglect of our duty, ὥρα ἤδη ἐγερθῆναι, *it is* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *now high time to wake*, unto a vigilant obſervance thereof: this we ſhall the rather doe, if we conſider, that *Sera nimis vita eſt crastina, vive hodie.* Matt. 1. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Rom. 13. 11.

7. For ill living now we ſhall come hereafter to be ſorry, if not with wholſome contrition, yet with a painful regret; we ſhall certainly one day repent, if not of our ſin, yet of our ſinning; if not ſo as to correct for the future, yet ſo as to condemn our ſelves for what is paſt: the conſideration of our having ſacrilegiouſly robb'd our Maker of the time due to his ſervice; of our having injuriouſly defrauded our ſouls of the opportunities granted to ſecure their welfare; of our having profuſely caſt away our moſt pretious hours of life upon vanity and folly, will ſometime twitch us ſorely. There is no man who doth not with a ſorrowful eye review an ill-paſt life; who would not gladly recal his miſpent time; *O mihi præteritos!* O that God would reſtore my paſt years to me, is every ſuch Man's Prayer, although it never was heard, never could be granted unto any. And what is more inconſiſtent with wiſdom, than to engage our ſelves upon making ſuch ineffectual and fruitleſs wiſhes? What is more diſagreeable to reaſon, than to do that, for which we muſt be forced to confeſs and call our ſelves fools? What Man of ſenſe for a flaſh of tranſitory Pleaſure, for a puff of vain repute, for a few ſcraps of dirty Pelf would plunge himſelf into ſuch a gulf of anguiſh?

8. On

Ille ſapit quiſquis, Poſthume, vixit heri. Mart. 5. 60.

Ampliat ætatis ſpatium ſibi vir bonus; hoc eſt,
Vivere bis, vitâ poſſe priore frui. Mart. 10. 23.

8. On the contrary, if laying hold on occaſion, we ſet our ſelves to do well, reflexion thereon will yield great ſatisfaction and pleaſure to us; we ſhall be glad that we have done, and that our task is over; we ſhall *enjoy our former life*; Our time which is ſo paſt will not yet be loſt unto us; but rather it will be moſt ſecurely ours, laid up beyond the reach of danger, in the repoſitory of a good conſcience.

Rom. 2.

9. Again, all our time of continuance in ſin we do *treaſure up wrath*, or accumulate guilt; and the larger our guilt is, the ſorer muſt be our repentance; the more bitter the ſorrow, the more low the humbling, the more earneſt the deprecation requiſite to obtain pardon: the broader and deeper the ſtain is, the more waſhing is needful to get it out; if we ſin much and long, we muſt grieve anſwerably, or we ſhall be no fit objects of mercy.

Quam magna deliquimus, tam graviter defleamus, &c. Cypr. *de Lapſ.* Or. 5.

10. And whenever the ſin is pardoned, yet indelible marks and monuments thereof will abide. We ſhall eternally be obliged to cry *peccavi*; although the puniſhment may be remitted, the deſert of it cannot be removed; a ſcar from it will ſtick in our fleſh; which ever will deform us; a tang of it will ſtay in our memory, which always will be diſguſtful; we ſhall never reflect on our miſcarriages without ſome confuſion and horrour; inceſſantly we ſhall be liable to that queſtion of St. *Paul, What fruit had ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* If therefore we could reaſonable preſume, yea if we could certainly foreſee, that we ſhould hereafter in time repent, yet it were unadviſable to perſiſt in ſin, ſeeing it being once committed, can never be reverſed; never expunged from the regiſters of time, never daſhed out from the tables of our mind and memory; but will perpetually reſt as matter of doleful conſideration, and of tragical ſtory to us. *Then ſhalt thou remember thy ways, and be aſhamed. That thou may ſt remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God: Then ſhall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.*

Poena patiſſi demi, culpa perennis erit. Ovid.

Ἡ συγχωρησις ἐμένετο τὴν ἁμαρτημάτων τῶν πρὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἡ μνήμη τὴν συγχεχωρημένων ἁμαρτημάτων ἐκ ἠφανίζετο τῶν τοῦ Παύλου. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 97.

Rom. 6. 21.

Ezek. 16. 61.
Ezek. 16. 63.

Ezek. 36. 31.
20. 43.

11. Again, ſo much time as we ſpend in diſobedience, ſo much of reward we do forfeit; for commenſurate to our works ſhall our rewards be; the fewer our good works are in the courſe of our preſent life, the ſmaller ſhall be the meaſures of joy, of glory, of felicity diſpenſed to us hereafter; the later conſequently we repent, the leſs we ſhall be happy: *One ſtar* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *differeth from another in glory*; and of all ſtars, thoſe in the celeſtial ſphere will ſhine brighteſt, who did ſoon riſe here, and continued long by the luſtre of their good works to glorify their heavenly Father; for *the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* While therefore we let our intereſt lie dead by lingring, or run behind by ſinful practice, we are very bad husbands for our ſoul; our ſpiritual eſtate doth thereby hugely ſuffer; every minute contracteth a damage that runneth through millions of ages; and which therefore will amount to an immenſe ſum: And who for all the pleaſures here would forego one degree of bliſsful joy hereafter; who for all earthly ſplendours would exchange one ſpark of celeſtial glory; who for all the treaſures below would let ſlip one gem out of his heavenly crown?

1 Cor. 15. 41.

Prov. 1. 18.

12. Far-

12. Farther, let us conſider that whatever our age, whatever our condition or caſe be, the advice not to procraſtinate our obedience is very ſuitable and uſeful.

Art thou young? then it is moſt proper to enter upon living well. For when we ſet out, we ſhould be put in a right way; when we begin to be men, we ſhould begin to uſe our reaſon well; life and vertue ſhould be of the ſame ſtanding; what is more ugly than a Child, that hath learnt little, having learnt to do ill; than naughtineſs ſpringing up in that ſtate of innocence? the foundation of good life is to be laid in that age, upon which the reſt of our life is built; for this is the manner of our proceeding; the preſent dependeth always upon what is paſt; our practice is guided by notions that we had ſucked in, is ſwayed by inclinations that we got before; whence uſually our firſt judgments of things, and our firſt propenſions do ſtretch their influence upon the whole future life. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,* ſaith the *Wiſe-man.* Prov. 22. 6.

Sub pædagogo cœperis licet, ſerum eſt. Matt. 8. 44.

That age as it is moſt liable to be corrupted by vice, ſo it is moſt capable of being imbued with vertue; then nature is ſoft and pliable, ſo as eaſily to be moulded into any ſhape, ready to admit any ſtamp impreſſed thereon; then the mind is a pure table, in which good principles may be fairly engraven, without raſing out any former ill prejudices; then the heart being a ſoil free of weeds, the ſeeds of goodneſs being caſt therein will undiſturbedly grow and thrive; then the complexion being tender will eaſily be ſet into a right poſture; Our ſoul is then a Veſſel empty and ſweet; good liquor therefore may be inſtilled, which will both fit it, and ſeaſon it with a durable tincture; the extream curioſity and huge credulity of that age, as they greedily will ſwallow any, ſo will they admit good inſtruction. If we do then imbibe falſe conceptions, or have bad impreſſions made on our minds, it will be hard afterwards to expel, or to correct them. Paſſion is then very fluid and moveable, but not being impetuouſly determined any way, may eaſily be derived into the right chanel. Then the quickneſs of our wit, the briskneſs of our fancy, the freſhneſs of our memory, the vigour of our affections, the luſty and active mettle of our ſpirits being applied to vertuous ſtudies and endeavours, will produce moſt noble fruits; the beauty of which will adorn us, the ſweetneſs will pleaſe us, ſo as to leave on our minds a perpetual reliſh and ſatisfaction in goodneſs. Then being leſs encombred with the cares, leſs intangled in the perplexities, leſs expoſed to the temptations of the World and ſecular affairs, we can more eaſily ſet forth, we may proceed more expeditely in good courſes. Then being void of that ſtinging remorſe, which doth adhere to reflexions upon paſt follies, and miſpent time, with more courage and alacrity we may proſecute good undertakings; then beginning ſo ſoon to embrace vertue, we ſhall have advantage with more leiſure, and more eaſe to poliſh and perfect it through our enſuing courſe of life; coming out ſo early, in the very morning of our age, without much ſtraining, marching on ſoftly and fairly, we may go through our journey to happineſs.

Natura tenaciſſimi ſumus eorum quæ rudibus annis percipimus, &c. Quint. 1. 1. *Difficulter eraditur quod rudes animi perbiberunt.* Hier. *ad* Lætam.

Ut corpora ad quoſdam membrorum flexus formari niſi tenera non poſſunt, ſic animos ad pleraque duriores robur ipſum facit. Quint *ib.*

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens ſervabit odorem Teſta diu.

Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Ἡδὲι γὰρ ὅτι χαλεπὸν ἡ νεότης, ὅτι δὲ εἰκῆ τὸν, ὅτι δυσεξαπάτητον, ὅτι δὲ ὀλίδον, καὶ σφοδρότερα δεῖ χαλινοῦ. Chryſ. ἀγάλμα.

Our actions then are the firſt fruits of our life, which therefore are fit and due ſacrifices to our Maker; which if we do withdraw, we ſhall have

have nothing left ſo worthy or acceptable to preſent unto him; will it be ſeemly to offer him the dregs and refuſe of our age; ſhall we not be aſhamed to bring a crazy temper of body and ſoul, dry bones and decayed ſenſes; a dull fancy, a treacherous memory, a ſluggiſh ſpirit before him? ſhall we then when we are fit for little begin to undertake his ſervice? with our decrepit limbs and waſted ſtrength ſhall we ſet our ſelves to *run the ways of his commandments*?

As it is uncomfortable to think of being parſimonious, when our ſtock is almoſt gone; ſo it is to become thrifty of our life, when it comes near the bottom. Δεινὴ ἐνὶ πυθμενὶ φειδώ.

If we keep innocency, ſpend our youth well, it will yeild unexpreſſible comfort to us; it will ſave us much ſorrow, it will prevent many inconveniences to us: If we have ſpent it ill, it will yeild us great diſpleaſure, it will coſt us much pains; we ſhall be forced ſadly to bewail our folly and vanity therein; it will be bitter to ſee, that we muſt unlive our former life, and undoe all we have done; that we muſt renounce the Principles we have avowed, we muſt root out the habits we have planted, we muſt forſake the Paths which we have beaten and ſo long trode in, if ever we will be happy; it will be grievous to us, when we come with penitential regret to deprecate, *Lord remember not the ſins of my youth*; we ſhall feel ſore pain, when *our bones are full of the ſins of our youth*, and we come *to poſſeſs the iniquities thereof*.

Pſal. 37. 38.

Pſal. 25. 7.

Job 20. 11. 13. 26.

Lam. 3. 27.

Fingit equum tenera docilem cervice Magiſter
Ire viam, quam monſtrat eques.—Hor. Ep. 12. 1.

It is therefore *good* (as the *Prophet* ſaith) *that a man bear the yoke in his youth*, when his neck is tender; it is excellent advice which the *Preacher* giveth, *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, and the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay I have no pleaſure in them.*

Eth. 1. 3.

Τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐκ ἔστιν οἰκεῖος ὁ νέος· ἄπειρος γὰρ τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον πράξεων· ἕπονται δὲ οἱ λόγοι περὶ τούτων καὶ ἐν τούτοις ἀεί. ἔτι τοῖς πάθεσιν ἀκολουθητικὸς ὢν ματαίως ἐκ ἐσται ἀκροατὴς καὶ ἀνωφελῶς.

Ariſtotle ſaith, that young men are not *fit hearers of moral doctrine*, becauſe (ſaith he) *they are unexperienced in affairs of life*; and *becauſe they are apt to follow their paſſions, which indiſpoſe to hear with fruit or profit*; but his concluſion is falſe, and his reaſons may be well turned againſt him; for becauſe young men want experience, therefore is there no bad prejudice, no contrary habit to obſtruct their embracing ſound doctrine; becauſe their paſſions are vehement and ſtrong, therefore being rightly ordered, and ſet upon good objects they with great force will carry them to vertuous practice; that indeed is the beſt time to regulate and tame Paſſions; as Horſes muſt be broken when they are Colts, Dogs muſt be made when they are Whelps, elſe they will never be brought to any thing. The *Poet* therefore adviſed better than the *Philoſopher*

Hor. Ep. 1. 2.

—*nunc adbibe puro*
Pectore verba puer, nunc te melioribus offer;

and St. *Paul* plainly doth confute him, when he biddeth Parents to *educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the* Lord; when he chargeth *Titus*, that he *exhort young men to be ſober-minded*; when he commendeth *Timothy*, for that he had ἀπὸ βρέφους *from his infancy known the Holy Scriptures*; So doth the *Pſalmiſt*, when he ſaith, *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed according to thy word*. And *Solomon*, when he declareth that his moral Precepts did ſerve *to give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion*; when he biddeth us to *train up a child in the way he ſhould go*; St. *Peter* doth intimate the ſame, when he biddeth us, *as new born babes to deſire the ſincere milk of the word*; and our Saviour, when

Eph. 6. 4.

Tit. 2. 6.

2 Tim. 2. 22.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

Pſal. 119. 9.

Prov. 1. 4.

Prov. 22. 6, 15.

1 Pet. 2. 2.

when he ſaid, *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of ſuch is the kingdom of God*; that is, the more Simplicity and Innocence a Man is endued with, the more apt he is to embrace and comply with the Evangelical Doctrine: *Ariſtotle* therefore was out, when he would exclude young Men from the Schools of Vertue. It is obſervable that he contradicteth himſelf; for Οὐ μικρὸν διαφέρει τὸ ἔτως ἢ ἔτως, οὐδὲ ὀλίγον ἐκ νέων ἐθίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ πάμπολυ, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν. *It is* (ſaith he) *of no ſmall concernment to be from youth accuſtomed thus or thus; yea, 'tis very much, or rather all*: And how ſhall a young Man be accuſtomed to do well, if he be not allowed to learn what is to be done? Luk. 18. 16. Eth. 2. 2.

Again, are we old? it is then high time to begin; we have then leſs time to ſpare from our moſt important Buſineſs; we ſtand then in moſt imminent Danger, upon the Edge of Perdition, and ſhould therefore be nimble to skip out thence; our Forces being diminiſhed, our Quickneſs and Induſtry ſhould be encreaſed; the later we ſet out, the more ſpeed it behoveth us to make. If we ſtay, we ſhall grow continually more indiſpoſed and unfit to amend; it will be too late, when utter Decrepitneſs and Dotage have ſeized upon us; and our Body doth ſurvive our Soul. When ſo much of our Time, of our Parts, of our Strength are fled, we ſhould husband the reſt to beſt advantage, and make the beſt ſatisfaction we can unto God, and unto our Souls with the Remainder.

Quod facere ſolent qui ſerius exeunt — calcar adamus. Sen. *Ep.* 68. 76. 19.

Apoc. 3. 2. Στήριζον τὰ λοιπὰ, ἃ μέλλει ἀποθανεῖν.

This Age hath ſome peculiar Advantages, which we ſhould embrace; the Froth of Humours is then boiled out, the Fervours of Luſt are ſlacked, Paſſions are allayed, Appetites are flatted; ſo that then Inclinations to ſin are not ſo violent, nor doth the Enjoyment thereof ſo much gratifie.

— non omnia grandior ætas
Quæ fugiamus habet — Ovid.

Ἡ μὲν γὰρ νεότης πελάγει ἐοικυῖα μαινομένῳ, κυμάτων ἀγρίων, καὶ πνευμάτων χειμοῦντι πονηρῶν· ἡ δὲ πολιὰ ὥσπερ εἰς λιμένα ἀκύμαντον τὰς ἤδη γεγηρακότων ὁρμίζει ψυχὰς, παρέχουσα τῇ ὄντως ἡλικίας ἐντεῦθεν ἀσφάλειαν. Chryſ. *Tom* 6. *Orat.* 38.

Long Experience then hath diſcovered the Vanity of all Worldly things, and the Miſchief of ill Courſes; ſo that we can then hardly admire any thing, or be fond of enjoying what we have found unprofitable or hurtful.

Age is excuſed from Compliance with the Faſhions, and thence much exempted from Temptations of the World; ſo that it may be good without Obſtacle or Oppoſition.

It is proper thereto to be grave and ſerious, and conſequently to be vertuous; for Gravity without Vertue and Seriouſneſs about vain things are ridiculous.

Nothing doth ſo adorn this Age as Goodneſs, nothing doth ſo diſgrace it as Wickedneſs; *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs*; but it is a Mark of Infamy, if it be obſerved proceeding in a courſe of Iniquity, it ſignifieth that Experience hath not improved it, it argueth incorrigible Folly, or rather incurable Madneſs therein. Prov. 16. 31.

There is indeed no Care, no Imployment proper for old Men but to prepare for their Diſſolution; to be bidding adieu to the World with its vain Pomps and miſchievous Pleaſures; to be packing up their Goods, to be caſting their Accompts, to be fitting themſelves to abide in that State into which they are tumbling, to appear at that Bar, before which ſuddenly Nature will ſet them. As a Ship which hath long been toſs'd and Weather-beaten, which is ſhattered in its Timber, and hath loſt much of its Rigging, ſhould do nothing in that caſe but work toward the Port, there to find its Safety and Eaſe; ſo ſhould a Man, who having paſt many Storms and Agitations of the World is grievouſly battered and torn with Age,

In freto vivimus, moriamur in portu. Sen. *Ep.* 19.

Age, ſtrive only to die well, to get ſafe into the Harbour of eternal Reſt.

Οὔτ' ἄωρος οὐδεὶς ἔστιν, οὔτε πάρωρος πρὸς τὸ τὴν ψυχὴν ὑγιαίνειν. Epic. *ad* Monœc.

In fine, *Epicurus* himſelf ſaid well, that *no man is either immature or over-ripe in regard to his ſoul's health*; we can never ſet upon it too ſoon, we ſhould never think it too late to begin; to live well is always the beſt thing we can do, and therefore we ſhould at any time endeavour it; there are common Reaſons for all Ages, there are ſpecial Reaſons for each Age, which moſt ſtrongly and moſt clearly do urge it; it is moſt ſeaſonable for young Men, it is moſt neceſſary for old Men, it is moſt adviſable for all Men *.

* *Quare juventus, imo omnis ætas (neque enim rectæ voluntati ſerum eſt tempus ullum) totis mentibus huc tendamus, in hoc elaboremus; forſan & conſummare contingat.* Quint. 12. 1.

Again, be our Condition what it will, this Advice is reaſonable: Are we in Health? we owe God Thanks for that excellent Gift, and the beſt Gratitude we can expreſs is the improving it for his Service and to our own Good; we ſhould not loſe the Advantage of a Seaſon ſo fit for our Obedience and Repentance; while the Forces of our Body and Mind are entire, while we are not diſcompoſed by Pain or Faintneſs, we ſhould ſtrive to diſpatch this needful Work, for which Infirmity may diſable us.

Are we ſick? it is then time to conſider our Frailty, and the beſt we can to obviate the worſt Conſequences thereof: It is then very fit, when we do feel the ſad Effects of Sin, to endeavour the Prevention of worſe Miſchiefs that may follow; it is ſeaſonable, when we lie under God's correcting Hand to ſubmit unto him, to deprecate his Wrath, to ſeek Reconciliation with him by all kinds of Obedience ſutable to that State; with ſerious Reſolutions to amend hereafter, if it ſhall pleaſe God to reſtore us; it is moſt adviſeable, when we are in the Borders of Death, to provide for that State which lieth juſt beyond it.

Are we rich and proſperous? 'tis expedient then preſently to amend, leſt our Wealth do ſoon corrupt us with Pride, with Luxury, with Sloth, with Stupidity; leſt our Proſperity becometh an inevitable Snare, an irrecoverable Bane unto us. Prov. 1. 32.

Are we poor or afflicted? 'tis then alſo needful to repent quickly; that we may have a comfortable Support for our Soul, and a certain Succour in our Diſtreſs; that we may get a Treaſure to ſupply our Want, a joy to drown our Sorrow; a Buoy to keep our Hearts from ſinking into Deſperation and Diſconſolateneſs. This Condition is a Medicine, which God adminiſtreth for our Soul's Health; if it do not work preſently ſo as to do us good, it will prove both grievous and hurtful to us.

13. Laſtly, we may conſider, that abating all the rueful Conſequences of abiding in Sin, abſtracting from the deſperate Hazards it expoſeth us to in regard to the future Life, it is moſt reaſonable to abandon it, betaking our ſelves to a vertuous Courſe of Practice. For Vertue in it ſelf is far more eligible than Vice, to keep God's Commandments hath much greater Convenience than to break them; the Life of a good Man in all conſiderable reſpects is highly to be preferred above the Life of a bad Man: for what is Vertue, but a way of living that advanceth our Nature into a Similitude with God's moſt excellent and happy Nature; that promoteth our true Benefit and Intereſt; that procureth and preſerveth Health, Eaſe, Safety, Liberty, Peace, comfortable Subſiſtence, fair Repute, Tranquillity of Mind, all kinds of Convenience to us? to what Ends did our moſt benign and moſt wiſe Maker

Eſt virtus nihil aliud quàm in ſe perfecta, & ad ſummum perducta natura, Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

ker deſign and ſuit his Law, but to the furthering our good, and ſecuring us from Miſchief, as not only himſelf hath declared, but Reaſon ſheweth, and Experience doth atteſt? What is Vice but a ſort of practice which debaſeth and diſparageth us, which plungeth us into grievous Evils, which bringeth Diſtemper of Body and Soul, Diſtreſs of Fortune, Danger, Trouble, Reproach, Regret, and numberleſs Inconveniencies upon us; which for no other reaſon, than becauſe it ſo hurteth and grieveth us, was by our loving Creator interdicted to us? Vertue is moſt noble and worthy, moſt lovely, moſt profitable, moſt pleaſant, moſt creditable; Vice is moſt ſordid and baſe, ugly, hurtful, bitter, diſgraceful in its ſelf, and in its conſequences. If we compare them together, we ſhall find, that Vertue doth always preſerve our Health, but Vice commonly doth impair it; that Vertue improveth our Eſtate, Vice waſteth it; that Vertue adorneth our Reputation, Vice blemiſheth it; that Vertue ſtrengtheneth our parts, Vice weakeneth them; that Vertue maintaineth our Freedom, Vice enſlaveth us; that Vertue keepeth our Mind in Order and Peace, Vice diſcompoſeth and diſquieteth it; Vertue breedeth Satisfaction and Joy, Vice ſpawneth Diſpleaſure and Anguiſh of Conſcience: To enter therefore into a vertuous courſe of Life, what is it but to embrace Happineſs; to continue in vicious Practice, what is it but to ſtick in Miſery?

Deut. 10. 13. Mic. 6. 8. Neh. 9. 13. Rom. 7. 12. Pſal. 19. 9. 119. 107.

By entring into good Life, we enter into the Favour and Friendſhip of God, engaging his infinite Power and Wiſdom for our Protection, our Succour, our Direction and Guidance; enjoying the ſweet Effluxes of his Mercy and Bounty; we therewith become Friends to the holy Angels, and bleſſed Saints; to all good Men, being united in a holy and happy Conſortſhip of Judgment, of Charity, of Hope, of Devotion with them; we become Friends to all the World, which we oblige by good Wiſhes, and good Deeds, and by the Influence of good Example: we become Friends to our ſelves, whom we thereby enrich and adorn with the beſt Goods; whom we gratifie and pleaſe with the choiceſt Delights: but perſiſting in Sin, we continue to affront, wrong, and diſpleaſe our Maker, to be diſloyal towards our Sovereign Lord; to be ingrateful towards our chief Benefactour, to diſoblige the beſt Friend we have, to provoke a moſt juſt and ſevere Judge, to cope with Omnipotency, to contradict Infallibility, to enrage the greateſt Patience, to abuſe immenſe Goodneſs: We thereby become Enemies to all the World, to God, whom we injure and diſhonour; to the Friends of God, whom we deſert and oppoſe; to the Creatures, which we abuſe to our Pride, Luſt and Vanity; to our Neighbours, whom we corrupt or ſeduce; to our ſelves, whom we bereave of the beſt Goods, and betray to the worſt Evils.

Beginning to live ſoberly, we begin to live like Men, following the Conduct of Reaſon; beginning to live in Charity, we commence the Life of Angels, enjoying in our ſelves moſt ſweet Content, and procuring great Benefit to others; but going on in ſinful Voluptuouſneſs, we proceed to live like Beaſts, wholly guided by Senſe, and ſwayed by Appetite; being pertinacious in Malice, we continue to be like Fiends, working torment in our ſelves, and Miſchief to our Neighbours.

Embracing Vertue we become wiſe and ſober Men, worthy and honourable, beneficial and uſeful to the World; but continuing in Vice, we continue to be fooliſh and vain, to be vile and deſpicable, to be worthleſs and uſeleſs.

By our Delay to amend, what do we gain? what, but a little flaſhy and tranſient Pleaſure inſtead of a ſolid and durable Peace; but a little counterfeit Profit inſtead of real Wealth; but a little Smoak of deceitful

Opinion inſtead of unqueſtionable ſound Honour; Shadows of imaginary Goods inſtead of thoſe which are moſt ſubſtantial and true, a good Mind, the Love of God, the aſſured Welfare of our Souls. But this Field of Diſcourſe is too ſpacious; I ſhall only therefore for Concluſion ſay, that ſpeedily applying our ſelves to Obedience, and breaking off our Sins by Repentance, is in effect nothing elſe but from a preſent Hell in Trouble, and the Danger of a final Hell in Torment to be tranſlated into a double Heaven; one of joyful Tranquillity here, another of bliſsful Reſt hereafter; unto the which Almighty God in his Mercy bring us all, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom for ever be all Glory and Praiſe. *Amen.*

1 Theſ. 5. 23. *The very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

SERMON XVIII.

Of Induſtry in general.

ECCLES. IX. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

Rom. 21. 11. IN St. *Paul's* Epiſtle to the *Romans*, among divers excellent Rules of Life, preſcribed by that great Maſter, this is one, Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί. *Be not ſlothful in buſineſs*, or to Buſineſs; And in the 2d Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, among other principal Vertues, or worthy Accompliſhments, for *abounding* wherein the *Apoſtle* commendeth thoſe Chriſtians, he rankeneth *all diligence*, or induſtry exerciſed in all Affairs and Duties incumbent on them: this is that Vertue, the Practice whereof in this moral Precept or Advice the *Royal Preacher* doth recommend unto us; being indeed an eminent Vertue, of very general Uſe, and powerful Influence upon the Management of all our Affairs, or in the Conduct of our whole Life.

Πᾶσα σπουδὴ. 2 Cor. 8. 7.

Induſtry, I ſay, in general, touching all Matters incident, which *our hand findeth to do*, that is, which Diſpenſation of Providence doth offer, or which choice of Reaſon embraceth, for employing our active Powers of Soul and Body, the *Wiſe-man* doth recommend; and to preſſing the Obſervance of his Advice (waving all curious Remarks either *Critical* or *Logical* upon the Words) I ſhall preſently apply my Diſcourſe, propoſing divers Conſiderations apt to excite us thereto; only firſt, let me briefly deſcribe it, for our better Apprehenſion of its true Notion and Nature.

By Induſtry we underſtand a ſerious and ſteady Application of Mind, joined with a vigorous Exerciſe of our active Faculties in proſecution of any reaſonable, honeſt, uſeful Deſign, in order to the Accompliſhment, or Attainment of ſome conſiderable Good; as for inſtance, a *Merchant* is induſtrious

dustrious who continueth intent and active in driving on his Trade for acquiring Wealth; a *Soldier* is industrious, who is watchful for occasion, and earnest in Action towards obtaining the Victory; and a *Scholar* is industrious, who doth assiduously bend his Mind to study for getting Knowledge.

Industry doth not consist merely in Action; for that is incessant in all Persons, our Mind being a restless thing never abiding in a total Cessation from Thought or from Design (being like a Ship in the Sea, if not steered to some good purpose by reason, yet tossed by the Waves of Fancy, or driven by the Winds of Temptation somewhither.) But the direction of our Mind to some good End, without roving or flinching, in a streight and steady course, drawing after it our active Powers in execution thereof, doth constitute Industry; the which therefore usually is attended with Labour and Pain; for our Mind (which naturally doth affect Variety and Liberty, being apt to loath familiar Objects, and to be weary of any Constraint) is not easily kept in a constant Attention to the same thing; And the Spirits imployed in Thought are prone to flutter and fly away, so that it is hard to fix them: And the corporeal Instruments of Action being strained to a high pitch, or detained in a Tone will soon feel a Lassitude, somewhat offensive to Nature; whence Labour or Pain is commonly reckoned an Ingredient of Industry; and Laboriousness is a Name signifying it; upon which Account this Vertue (as involving Labour) deserveth a peculiar Commendation; it being then most laudable to follow the Dictates of Reason, when so doing is attended with Difficulty and Trouble.

Ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ φύσιν ἔχουσα τὴν κινητικὴν διαπαντὸς, κὰν ἀνέχηται ἡσυχίαν, ἔμπεφυκὸς τὸ ζῷον τοῦτο ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς, &c. Chrys. *in* Act. *Or.* 35.

Such in general I conceive to be the nature of Industry; to the practice whereof the following Considerations may induce.

1. We may consider that Industry doth befit the Constitution and Frame of our Nature; all the Faculties of our Soul, and Organs of our Body being adapted in a Congruity and Tendency thereto: Our Hands are suited for Work, our Feet for Travel, our Senses to watch for occasion of pursuing Good, and eschewing Evil, our Reason to plod and contrive Ways of imploying the other Parts and Powers; all these, I say, are formed for Action; and that not in a loose and gadding way; or in a slack and remiss degree, but in regard to determinate Ends, with Vigour requisite to attain them; and especially our Appetites do prompt to Industry, as inclining to things not attainable without it; according to that Aphorism of the *Wiseman*, Ἐπιθυμίαι ὀκνηρὸν ἀποκτείνουσιν —— *The Desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour*; that is, he is apt to desire things which he cannot attain without Pains; and not enduring them he for want thereof doth feel a deadly Smart and Anguish: Wherefore in not being industrious we defeat the Intent of our Maker; we pervert his Work and Gifts; we forfeit the Use and Benefit of our Faculties; we are bad Husbands of Natures Stock. Prov. 21. 25. 13. 4.

2. In consequence hereto Industry doth preserve and perfect our Nature; keeping it in good tune and temper; improving and advancing it toward its best state. The Labour of our Mind in attentive Meditation and Study doth render it capable and patient of thinking upon any Object or Occasion; doth polish and refine it by use, doth enlarge it by Accession of Habits; doth quicken and rowse our Spirits, dilating and diffusing them into their proper Chanels: The very Labour of our Body doth keep the Organs of Action sound and clean, discussing Fogs and superfluous Humours, opening Passages, distributing Nourishment, exciting vital Heat: Barring the use of it, no good Constitution of Soul or Body can subsist; but a foul Rust,

Rust, a dull Numbness, a resty Listlesness, a heavy Unweildiness must seize on us; our Spirits will be stifled and choaked, our Hearts will grow faint and languid, our Parts will flag and decay; the Vigour of our Mind, and the Health of our Body will be much impaired.

Πάντα γὰρ ἡ ἀργία ϛλάπλει, καὶ τὰ μέλη σώματος αὐτὰ, &c. Chrys. in Act. Orat. 35.

Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ποιύτε τὸ σῶμα ἔκλυτον, &c. Ibid.

It is with us as with other things in nature, which by Motion are preserved in their native Purity and Perfection, in their Sweetness, in their Lustre, Rest corrupting, debasing and defiling them; If the Water runneth it holdeth clear, sweet and fresh; but Stagnation turneth it into a noisome Puddle: If the Air be fanned by Winds, it is pure and wholsome, but from being shut up it groweth thick and putrid; If Metals be employed, they abide smooth and splendid; but lay them up, and they soon contract Rust; If the Earth be belaboured with Culture, it yieldeth Corn; but lying neglected, it will be overgrown with Brakes and Thistles; and the better its Soil is the ranker Weeds it will produce; all nature is upheld in its Being, Order and State by constant Agitation; every Creature is incessantly employed in Action conformable to its designed End and Use; In like manner the Preservation and Improvement of our Faculties depends on their constant Exercise.

Ποῖον ἵππον χρήσιμον, ὁ πυρῶν, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος; πόῖα ναῦς, ἡ πλέουσα ἢ ἡ ἀργοῦσα; ποῖον ὕδωρ, τὸ πρέχον, ἢ τὸ ἑστὼς; ποῖος σίδηρος, ὁ κειμένος, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος, &c. Chrys. ibid.

Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris. Hor. Ser. 1. 3.

Plut. περὶ παιδ. p. 3.

3. As we naturally were composed, so by Divine Appointment we were originally designed for Industry; God did not intend that Man should live idly, even in his best State; or should enjoy Happiness without taking pains; but did provide Work enough even in Paradise it self; for *The Lord God* (saith the *Text*) *took man, and put him into the Garden of* Eden *to dress it, and to keep it*, so that had we continu'd happy, we must have been ever busie, by our Industry sustaining our Life, and securing our Pleasure; otherwise Weeds might have overgrown Paradise, and that of *Solomon* might have been applicable to *Adam*, *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and loe it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof.*

Gen. 2. 15.

Prov. 24. 30, 31.

4. By our Transgression and Fall the necessity of Industry (together with a Difficulty of obtaining Good, and avoiding Evil) was encreased to us; being ordained both as a just Punishment for our Offences, and as an Expedient Remedy of our Needs: For thereupon *the Ground was cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles to us*; and it was our Doom pronounced by God's own Mouth, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground*; so that now Labour is fatally natural to us; now *Man* (as *Job* saith) *is born to labour as the sparks fly upward* (or, *as the Vultur's chicken soar aloft*) according to the *Greek* Interpreters.)

Gen. 3. 17—

Job 5. 7. Ἀλλ' ἄνθρωπος γεννᾶται κόπῳ· νεοσσοὶ ὑψηλὰ πέτονται. LXX. Interp. *Now great Travel (as the Son of Sirach saith) is created for every Man; and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, &c.* Ἀσχολία μεγάλη ἔκλισεν παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c. Ecclus 40. 1.

5. Accordingly our Condition and Circumstances in the World are so ordered, as to require Industry; so that without it we cannot support our Life in any Comfort or Convenience; whence St. *Paul*'s Charge upon the *Thessalonians*, that *If any one would not work, neither should he eat*, is in a manner a general Law imposed on Mankind by the Exigency of our State, according to that of *Solomon*; *The idle soul shall suffer hunger*, and, *The sluggard who will not plow by reason of the cold, shall beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

2 Thes. 3. 10.

Prov. 19. 15.

Prov. 20. 4.

Of all our many Necessities, none can be supplied without Pains, wherein all Men are obliged to bear a share; Every Man is to work for his Food, for his Apparel, for all his Accommodations, either immediately and directly,

ectly, or by Commutation and Equivalence; for the *Gentleman* himſelf cannot (at leaſt worthily and inculpably) obtain them otherwiſe, than by redeeming them from the Plowman, and the Artificer by Compenſation of other Cares and Pains conducible to publick Good.

The wiſe *Poet* did obſerve well, when he ſaid, Virg. Geor. 1.

——*Pater ipſe colendi*
Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit.

and St. *Chryſoſtome* doth propoſe the ſame Obſervation, that God to whet our Mind, and keep us from moping, would not that we ſhould eaſily come by the Fruits of the Earth, without employing much Art and many Pains; in order thereto there muſt be Skill uſed in obſerving Seaſons, and preparing the Ground; there muſt be Labour ſpent in manuring, in delving and plowing, in ſowing, in weeding, in fencing it; there muſt be Pains taken in reaping, in gathering, in laying up, in threſhing, and dreſſing the Fruit e'er we can enjoy it: So much Induſtry is needful to get Bread; and if we liſt to fare more daintily, we muſt either hunt for it, uſing Craft and Toil to catch it out of the Woods, the Water, the Air; or we muſt carefully wait on thoſe Creatures, of which we would ſerve our ſelves, feeding them that they may feed us; ſuch Induſtry is required to preſerve Mankind from ſtarving. And to guard it from other Inconveniences, Miſchiefs and Dangers ſurrounding us, it is no leſs requiſite: for to ſhelter us from Impreſſions of Weather, we muſt ſpin, we muſt weave, we muſt build; and in order thereto we muſt ſcrape into the Bowels of the Earth to find our Tools, we muſt ſweat at the Anvil to forge them for our Uſe; we muſt frame Arms to defend our Safety, and our Store from the Aſſaults of wild Beaſts, or of more dangerous Neighbours, wild Men. To furniſh Accommodations for our Curioſity and Pleaſure, or to provide for the Convenience and Ornament of our Life, ſtill greater meaſures of Induſtry are demanded; to ſatisfie thoſe Intents, a thouſand Contrivances of Art, a thouſand ways of Trade and Buſineſs do ſerve, without which they are not attainable. In whatever Condition any Man is in what State ſoever he be placed, whatſoever Calling or way of Life he doth embrace, ſome peculiar Buſineſs is thence impoſed on him, which he cannot with any Advantage or good ſucceſs, with any Grace, with any Comfort to himſelf, or Satisfaction to others, manage without competent Induſtry; nothing will go on of it ſelf without our Care to direct it, and our Pains to hold it, and forward it in the right Courſe: All which things ſhew, that Divine Wiſdom did intend that we ſhould live in the Exerciſe of Induſtry, or not well without it; having ſo many Needs to be ſupplied, ſo many Deſires to be appeaſed thereby; being expoſed to ſo many Troubles and Difficulties, from which we cannot extricate our ſelves without it. But farther yet,

——*curis acuens mortalia corda;*
Nec torpere gravi paſſus ſua regna veterno.
(Virg. *Ibid.*

Διὰ τοῦτο εἰς ἀνάγκλω κατέστησεν ἐργασίας ὁ Θεὸς, &c. Chryſoſt. *in* Act. *Hom.* 35.

6. Let us conſider that Induſtry hath annexed thereto, by Divine Appointment and Promiſe, the faireſt Fruits, and the richeſt Rewards: All good things (being either ſuch in themſelves, or made ſuch by Humane Eſteem) are the Fruits of Induſtry; ordered to ſprout from it, under the Protection and Influence of God's Bleſſing, which commonly doth attend it.

All good things indeed are the Gift of God, and freely diſpenſed by his Hand; but he doth not give them abſolutely without Condition, nor miraculouſly without Concurrence of ordinary means: By ſupporting our active Powers, and ſupplying needful Aid to our Endeavours; by directing and upholding us in the courſe of our Action; by preventing or removing Pſ. 37. 3. 23. Prov. 3. 6.

Ob-

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.

Obſtacles that might croſs us; by granting that final Succeſs which dependeth on his Pleaſure, he doth confer them on us; Our Hand commonly is God's Hand by which he worketh good, and reacheth out Benefits to us; governing and wielding it as he pleaſeth.

Judg. 6. 36. 7. 7. 2 Kings 5. 2. Joſh. 1. 17. 9.

God indeed could not well proceed otherwiſe in diſpenſing his Favours to us; not well, I ſay; that is, not without ſubverting the Method of things which himſelf hath eſtabliſhed; not without ſlighting and voiding his own firſt Bounty, or rendring the common Gifts of Nature (our Reaſon, our Senſes, our active Powers) vain and uſeleſs; not without making us uncapable of any Praiſe, or any Reward, which ſuppoſe Works atchieved by our earneſt Endeavour; not without depriving us of that ſweeteſt Content, which ſpringeth from enjoying the fruit of our Labour.

Καὶ πῦρ ἔμελλες λαμβάνειν ἢ μισθὸν, εἰ τὸ πᾶν ἔμελλεν ἔσεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ. Chryſ. *in* Eph. Orat. 2.

Hence it is, that whatever in holy Scripture is called the Gift of God, is otherwhile affirmed to be the effect of Induſtry; it being the uſeful Condition upon which, and the Inſtrument whereby divine Providence conveyeth good things to us: What God ſaid to *Joſhua*, doth imply the general Method of his Proceeding, *Only, be thou ſtrong and courageous —— that thou mayeſt proſper whitherſoever thou goeſt.*

Περὶ ἐκείνα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διάκειται ὧν ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔκαμε διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πόνος ἀνέμιξεν ἀρετῇ οἰκειοῦσθαι αἰτῇ ταύτῃ βελόμενος. Chryſ. *in* Joh. Or. 36.

Διὰ τοῦτο τὸ πᾶν ἑαυτοῦ ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἀφῆκέ τι ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἶναι ἵνα εὐ πέσωσιν λάβῃ τὸ φάσιν τοῦ δικαίως ἡμᾶς στεφανῶν. Chryſ. Tom. Or. 28.

Joſh. 1. 7.

Hence whatever we are directed to pray for, we are alſo exhorted to work for; declaring thereby, that we are ſerious in our Devotion, and do not mock God, asking that of him, which we deem not worth our Pains to acquire. It was well ſaid of *Cato* in *Saluſt*, *Vigilando, agendo, conſulendo, proſperè omnia cedunt, ubi ſocordiæ te atque ignaviæ tradideris nequicquam Deos implores, irati infeſtique ſunt.* We are bid to pray even for our daily Bread, yet we may ſtarve if we do not work for it; and in St. *Paul's* Judgment deſerve to do ſo.

Αὐτός τι νῦν δρῶν εἶτα τοὺς θεοὺς καλεῖ Cato *apud* Sal. *in bello Catil.*

Τὰν χεῖρα ποτφέροντα δεῖ τὰ τύχαν ὀπικαλεῖν. Plut. *Apoph.* Lac.

Hence we are bound to thank God for all thoſe things, for the want of which we muſt thank our ſelves, and condemn our own Sloth.

Hence, although we ſhould caſt our Care on God, and relie on his Providence, being ſollicitous for nothing; yet we muſt not ſo truſt him, as to tempt him, by neglecting the means which he doth offer, of relieving our ſelves; to be preſumptuouſly ſlothful being no leſs blameable, than to be diſtruſtfully careful.

Hence God in all ſuch Caſes, when we do need any good thing, is ſaid to be our Helper and Succourer to the obtaining it; which doth imply that we muſt co-operate with him; and join our Forces to thoſe, which He doth afford; ſo that as we can do nothing without him, ſo he will do nothing without us; yea, ſo that ſometime we are ſaid alſo to help God; *Curſe ye Meroz, curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* If ever God doth perform all without Human Labour conſpiring, it is only in behalf of thoſe who are ready to do their beſt, but unable to do any thing, being overpowered by the inſuperable Difficulty of things; But He never doth act Miracles, or controul Nature, he never doth ſtretch forth his Arm, or interpoſe ſpecial Power in favour of wilful and affected Sluggards.

Judg. 5. 13. Pſal. 72. 12. 22. 11. 2 Cor. 12. 10. 2 Chron. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 14. 6.

In fine, it is very plain both in common Experience, declaring the courſe of Providence, and in Holy Scripture, expreſſing God's Intention, that Almighty God doth hold forth all good things as the Prizes and Recompences of our vigilant Care, and painful Endeavour; as by ſurveying Particulars we may clearly diſcern.

No-

Nothing is more grateful to Men, than *prosperous Success* in their Undertakings, whereby they attain their Ends, satisfie their Desires, save their Pains, and come off with Credit; this commonly is the Effect of Industry (which commandeth Fortune, to which all things submit and serve) and scarce ever is found without it; An industrious Person, who as such is not apt to attempt things impossible or unpracticable, can hardly fail of compassing his Designs, because he will apply all means requisite, and bend all his Forces thereto; striving to break through all Difficulties, and to subdue all Oppositions thwarting his Purposes: But nothing of worth or Weight, can be atchieved with half a Mind, with a faint Heart, with a lame Endeavour; Any Enterprize undertaken without Resolution, managed without Care, prosecuted without Vigour, will easily be dashed and prove abortive, ending in Disappointment, Damage, Disgrace, and Dissatisfaction: So the *Wise-man* doth assure us: *The soul* (saith he) *of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat*; the one pineth away with ineffectual and fruitless Desires; the other thriveth upon Satisfaction in prosperous Success.

Τῆς ἐπιμελείας πάντα δῶλα λέγνεται. Antiph.

Quodcunque imperavit sibi animus, obtinuit, &c. Sen. *de* Ir. 2. 12.

Prov. 13. 4. 21. 25.

Plentiful Accommodations for our Sustenance and Convenience all Men will agree to be very desirable; and these are indeed the Blessings of him, who *visiteth the earth and enricheth it*; who *crowneth the year with his goodness*, and, *whose clouds drop fatness*; but they are so dispensed by Heaven, that Industry must concur therewith in deriving them to us, and Sloth will debar us of them; for *He* (saith the Holy Oracle) *that tilleth his land, shall be satisfied with bread*; *and the thoughts of the diligent alone tend to plenteousness*; but *The sluggard shall beg in harvest, and have nothing*; and *The idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

Prov. 15. 30.

Ps. 65. 9, 11. Gen. 21. 28.

Prov. 21. 11. Prov. 21. 5. (deest in LXX) Prov. 20. 4. Prov. 19. 15.

Wealth is that, which generally Men of all things are wont to affect and covet with most ardent Desire, as the great Store-house of their Needs and Conveniences, the sure Bulwark of their State and Dignity; the universal Instrument of compassing their Designs and Pleasures; And most evident it is, that in the natural course of things, Industry is the way to acquire it, to secure it, to improve and enlarge it; the which Course pursued innocently and modestly, God will be so far from obstructing, that he will further and bless it; for that indeed it would be a Flaw in Providence, if honest Industry, using the means it affordeth, should fail of procuring a Competency; which joined with a pious Contentedness in St. *Paul's* Computation, is *great wealth.* Wherefore although *Solomon* telleth us, that *the blessing of the Lord is that which maketh rich*; yet doth he not forget or contradict himself, when he also doth affirm, that *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*; and that *He who gathereth by labour shall encrease*; because God blesseth the Industrious, and by his own Hand, as the most proper Instrument, maketh him rich; when the Preacher said, *There is a man to whom God hath given riches and wealth*, he knew well enough what Man it was, to whom God giveth them; and that Sluggards were not fit Objects of that Liberality: For he had observed it to be their Doom to be poor and beggarly, their Nature to waste and embezil an Estate; He could assure us, that *Drowsiness shall cloath a man with rags*; He could propound it as a certain Observation, that *He who is slothful in his work, is brother to a great waster*; or that want of Industry in our Business will no less impair our Estate, than Prodigality it self; He could more than once warn the Slothful, that if he did *sleep on*, or persist in his sluggish way, Indigency would surprize and seize on him with an insupportable Violence: So (saith he) *shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

1 Tim. 6. 6. Prov. 15. 16.

Prov. 10. 22. 22. 4. 2 Chron. 29. 12.

Eccles. 5. 19. Prov. 10. 4. 13, 11.

Eccles. 6. 1, 2.

S. *Paul* exhorteth to *work with our hands* ἵνα μηδενὸς χρείαν ἔχητε. 1 Thes. 4. 12.

Prov. 23. 21. Prov. 18. 9.

Prov. 10. 4.

Prov. 6. 11. 24. 32.

Another Darling of Humane Affection (and a Jewel indeed of conſiderable worth and uſe in our Life) is *Honour*, or Reputation among Men: This alſo plainly, after the common Reaſon and Courſe of things, is purchaſed and preſerved by Induſtry: For he that aſpireth to worthy things, and aſſayeth laudable Deſigns, purſuing them ſteadily with ſerious Application of Heart, and reſolute Activity will rarely fail of good Succeſs, and conſequently will not miſs Honour, which ever doth crown Victory; And if he ſhould hap to fail in his Deſign, yet he will not loſe his Credit; for having meant well, and done his beſt, all will be ready to excuſe, many to commend him: The very Qualities which Induſtry doth exerciſe, and the Effects which it doth produce, to beget Honour; as being ornaments of our Perſon and State. God himſelf (from whom *honour cometh*, and whoſe ſpecial Prerogative it is to beſtow it, he, as King of the World, being the Fountain of Honour) will be concerned to dignifie an induſtrious Management of his Gifts with that natural and proper Recompence thereof; conducting him who fairly treadeth in the Path of Honour, that he ſhall ſafely arrive unto it. It is therefore a Matter of eaſie Obſervation which the wiſe *Prince* doth prompt us to mark; *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs? he ſhall ſtand before kings, he ſhall not ſtand before mean men*; that is, Diligence, as it is the faireſt, ſo it is the ſureſt way to the beſt Preferment; as it qualifieth a Man for Employment, and rendereth him uſeful to the World, ſo it will procure worthy Employment for him, and attract the World to him; as the ſame great Author again doth aſſert. *The hand*, ſaith he, *of the diligent ſhall bear rule*; Yea, ſo honourable a thing is Induſtry it ſelf; that an Exerciſe thereof in the meaneſt Rank is productive of Eſteem, as the *Wiſe-man* again doth obſerve and tell us; *He that waiteth on his maſter* (that is, with Diligence attendeth on the Buſineſs committed to him) *ſhall be honoured.*

1 Chron. 29. 11.
Dan. 5. 18.
Eccleſ. 5. 19.
Prov. 22. 29.
Prov. 12. 24.
Prov. 27. 18.
Ὃς φυλάσσει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κύριον, τιμὴν ἁρπάσεται.

No induſtrious Man is contemptible; for he is ever looked upon as being in a way of thriving, of working himſelf out from any ſtraits, of advancing himſelf into a better Condition. But without Induſtry we cannot expect any thing but Diſreſpect, Shame and Reproach, which are the certain Portion of the Slothful; he not having the Heart to enterprize or the Reſolution and Patience to atchieve any thing deſerving Regard, or apt to procure it; he wanting all the Ornaments and good Fruits that grow from Induſtry; he being only fit for a ſordid and ſervile Condition; whence *the ſlothful* (ſaith *Solomon*) *ſhall be under tribute*; and, *He that ſleepeth in harveſt, is a ſon that cauſeth ſhame*; He cauſeth it to his Relations by his beggarly Accoutrements, he cauſeth it much more to himſelf by his deſpicable Faultineſs, and by the diſgraceful Conſequences of it.

Prov. 12. 24.
Δόλιοι δὲ ἔσονται ἐν θερισμῷ.
Prov. 10. 5.

Another yet more precious Good, far ſurpaſſing all external Advantages of our State; the which in the Judgment of him who (together with it having a full poſſeſſion of all ſecular Proſperity, Wealth, Dignity and Power) was beſt able to prize it, *is better than rubies, and incomparably doth excel all things that may be deſired*, as ennobling, enriching and embelliſhing our better part: *Wiſdom*, I mean, or a good Comprehenſion, and right Judgment about Matters of higheſt importance to us, is the Prize of Induſtry, and not to be gained without it; Nature conferreth little thereto, Fortune contributeth much leſs; it cannot be bought at any rate; *It cannot* (ſaith *Job*) *be gotten for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed for the price thereof; it cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx or the Sapphire*; it is the Off-ſpring of watchful Obſervation and Experience, of ſerious Meditation and Study; of careful Reflexion on things, marking, comparing and weighing their Nature, their Worth, their

Prov. 8. 11.
3. 14. 15. 47.
Job 28. 18.
Nec rude quid proſit video ingenium. Hor. *de Art.*
Job 28. 15.

their Tendencies and Conſequences; theſe are needful to the getting of Wiſdom, becauſe Truth, which it ſeeketh, commonly doth not lie in the Surface, obvious to a ſuperficial Glance, nor only dependeth on a ſimple Conſideration of few things; but is lodged deep in the Bowels of things, and under a knotty Complication of various Matters; ſo that we muſt dig to come at it, and labour in unfolding it: Nor is it an eaſie Task to void the Prejudices ſpringing from Inclination or Temper, from Education or Cuſtom, from Paſſion and Intereſt, which cloud the Mind, and obſtruct the Attainment of Wiſdom.

If we will have it, we muſt get it as *Solomon* himſelf did, that great Maſter of it. How was that? *I gave*, ſaith he, *my heart to know wiſdom.* He who made it his Option and Choice before all things; who ſo earneſtly and ſo happily did pray for it; upon whom it is ſo expreſly ſaid, that God in a ſpecial manner, and plentiful meaſure did beſtow it; who averreth God to be the ſole Donor of it (for, *The Lord*, ſaith he, *giveth wiſdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and underſtanding*) yet even he, did firſt give his Heart to it, before it was given into his Heart: He did not only gape for it to receive it by mere Infuſion; but he worked and ſtudied hard for it. He was indeed a great Student, an inquiſitive Searcher into Nature, a curious Obſerver of the World, a profound Conſiderer and Comparer of things; and by that induſtrious Courſe, promoted by Divine Bleſſing, he did arrive to that great Stock of ſo renowned a Wiſdom.

Eccleſ. 1. 17. 2. 3. 1 Kings 3. 9. 4. 29. Sap 8. 21. 9. 17. Eccleſ. 2. 26. Jam. 1. 5. Prov. 2. 6.

And the ſame Method it is which he preſcribeth to us for getting it; exhorting us, that we *incline our ear unto wiſdom, and apply our heart to underſtanding*; that we *cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for underſtanding*; that we *ſeek her as ſilver, and ſearch for her, as for hid treaſures*; in following which Courſe he doth aſſure us of good Succeſs; for *then* (ſaith he) *ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God*, which is *the head* or chief part of *Wiſdom*; And *Bleſſed* (ſaith he again, in the Perſon and Place of Wiſdom it ſelf) *is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors; for he that findeth me, findeth life, and ſhall obtain favour of the Lord*; It is the way, he ſuppoſeth of finding Wiſdom, to watch aſſiduouſly, to wait diligently upon the means of attaining her; and how infallible the Acquiſt of her is thereby, ſhe doth again by his Mouth thus acquaint us; *I love them that love me, and thoſe that ſeek me early ſhall find me*; and *She* (ſaith his *Imitatour*) *is eaſily ſeen of them that love her, and found of ſuch as ſeek her; whoſo ſeeketh her early, ſhall have no great travel, for he ſhall find her ſitting at his doors.*

Prov. 22. 3, 4. 1. 5. Prov. 2. 5. Prov. 8. 34. Prov. 8. 17. Sap. 6. 12, 13, 14.

This indeed is the only way; Idleneſs is not capable of ſo rich and noble a Purchaſe; a ſlothful Perſon may be conceited (yea needs muſt be ſo) but he can never be wiſe; *A ſluggard* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon*; this Conceit of Wiſdom is a natural Iſſue of his Ignorance; and 'tis indeed no ſmall part of his Folly, that he doth not perceive it; being no leſs ſtupid in reflection on his own mind, than in conſidering other matters; Being always in a ſlumber, he will often fall into ſuch pleaſant Dreams; and no wonder that he ſhould preſume upon abundance of Knowledge who not liſting to take any Pains in the Search or Diſcuſſion of things, doth ſnatch the firſt Appearances, doth embrace every Suggeſtion of his Fancy, every Conceit, gratifying his Humour for Truth.

Prov. 26. 16.

What ſhould I ſpeak of *Learning*, or the Knowledge of various things, tranſcending vulgar Apprehenſion? who knoweth not that we cannot otherwiſe reach any part of that than by aſſiduous Study and Contempla-

tion? who doth not find that all the power in the World is not able to command, nor all the Wealth of the *Indies* to purchaſe one Notion? who can be ignorant, that no Wit alone, or Strength of Parts can ſuffice, without great Induſtry to frame any Science, to learn any one Tongue, to know the Hiſtory of Nature, or of Providence: It is certainly by *Horace*'s Method,

Qui cupit optatam curſu contingere metam, Multa tulit, fecitque puer, ſudavit & alſit. Hor. *de Art.*

Multa tulit, fecitque puer,——

by much Exerciſe and Endurance of Pains, that any one can arrive to the Mark of being learned or skilful in any ſort of knowledge.

Τῇ μὲν κακίᾳ ἡδονῇ, τῇ δ' ἀρετῇ συγκεκλήρωται πόνος. Chryſ. *in* Joh. *Or.* 26. Κακία μὲν δὲ αὐτοδιδακτόν· ἀρετὴ δὲ σὺν πόνῳ κτᾶται. Syn. *de Provid.* 2.

But farther yet, *Vertue*, the nobleſt Endowment, and richeſt Poſſeſſion whereof Man is capable; the Glory of our Nature, the Beauty of our Soul, the goodlieſt Ornament, and the firmeſt Support of our Life; that alſo is the Fruit and Bleſſing of Induſtry; that of all things moſt indiſpenſibly doth need and require it. It doth not grow in us by Nature, nor befal us by Fortune; for Nature is ſo far from producing it, that it yieldeth mighty Obſtacles and Reſiſtances to its Birth, there being in the beſt Diſpoſitions much Averſeneſs from good, and great Proneneſs to Evil; Fortune doth not further its Acquiſts, but caſteth in Rubs and Hindrances thereto, every Condition preſenting its Allurements, or its Affrightments from it; all things within us, and about us conſpire to render its Production, and its Practice laborious.

Pſal. 127. 3.

It is ('tis true) a Gift of Heaven, and cannot be obtained without a ſpecial Influence of Divine Grace, but it is given as Children are (of whom it is ſaid, *Lo children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward*) not without ſore Travel and Labour of the Mother, not without grievous Difficulty and Pangs in the Birth: In our Converſion to embrace Vertue God doth guide us; but to what? to ſit ſtill? No, to walk, to run in his Ways: Grace doth move us, but whereto? to do nothing? No, but to ſtir, and act vigorouſly; *The holy Spirit doth help our infirmities*; but how could it help them, if we did not conjoin our beſt (though weak) Endeavours with its Operations? to what doth it συναντιλαμβάνεται, or *co-help* us, but *to ſtrive againſt ſin, to work righteouſneſs*, to perform Duty with earneſt Intention of Mind, and laborious Activity? *God* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*) *hath parted vertue with us, and neither hath left all to be in us, leſt we ſhould be elated to pride, nor himſelf hath taken all, leſt we ſhould decline to ſloth* *.

Rom. 8. 26. συναντιλαμβάνεται. Heb. 12. 4. Rom. 2. 10. Acts 10. 35.

Ἐμεῖσατο πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὴν ἀρετὴν ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ οὔτε ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀφῆκε τὸ πᾶν εἶναι, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ἀπόνοιαν ἐμπεσώμεθα καὶ πτε αὐτὸς τὸ πᾶν ἔλαβεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ῥᾳθυμίαν ἐκκλίνωμεν· ἀλλ' ὅτε. Chryſ. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 28.

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ τὰ καλὰ ἅπαντα ἀνθρώπων ἐγχειρήσας δίκαιον ἀνωθεν βοηθείας τελειωθήσεται· ἐδὲ ἢ ἄνωθεν χάρις ὅλη τὴν μὴ σπεδάζοντα παραγένοιτ' ἄν, ἀλλ' ἑκάτερα συγκεκραῶς προσήκει, σπεδαίως ἀνθρωπίνως, καὶ τῶν διὰ πίστεως ἄνωθεν καθήκουσαν συμμαχίαν εἰς τελειωσιν ἀρετῆς. Bas. *Conſt. Mon. cap.* 15.

Indeed the very Nature and Eſſence of Vertue doth conſiſt in the moſt difficult and painful Efforts of Soul; in the extirpating rooted Prejudices and Notions from our Underſtanding; in bending a ſtiff Will, and rectifying crooked Inclinations; in over-ruling a rebellious Temper; in curbing eager and importunate Appetites; in taming wild Paſſions; in withſtanding violent Temptations; in ſurmounting many Difficulties, and ſuſtaining many Troubles; in ſtrugling with various unruly Luſts within, and encountring many ſtout Enemies abroad, which aſſault our Reaſon, and *war againſt our ſoul*: In ſuch Exerciſes its very Being lieth; its Birth, its Growth, its Subſiſtence dependeth on them; ſo that from any Diſcontinuance or Remiſſion of them it would ſoon decay, languiſh away, and periſh.

What

What Attention, what Circumspection, and Vigilancy of Mind, what Intention of Spirit, what force of Resolution, what Command and Care over our selves doth it require, to keep our Hearts from vain Thoughts, and evil Desires; to guard our Tongue from wanton, unjust, uncharitable Discourse; to order our Steps uprightly and steadily in all the Paths of Duty? καὶ τί ἐκ ὀπίπονον τῆς τ ἀρετῆς; *and what* (as St. Chrysostome asketh) *of all things belonging to vertne is not laborious?* It is no small Task to know it, wherein it consisteth, and what is demanded of us; it is a far more painful thing to conform our Practice unto its Rules and Dictates. Chrys. *in* Joh. Or. 36.

If travelling in a rough Way; if climbing up a steep Hill; if combating stern Foes, and fighting sharp Battles; if crossing the Grain of our Nature and Desires; if continually holding a strict Rein over all our Parts and Powers, be things of Labour and Trouble, then greatly such is the Practice of Vertue.

Τῆς ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
Ἀθάνατοι, μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,
Καὶ τρηχύς —
Hes. Ἔργ. α.

Indeed each Vertue hath its peculiar Difficulty, needing much Labour to master it: *Faith* is called ἔργον πίστεως; *the work of faith*, and it is no such easie Work, as may be imagined, to bring our Hearts into a thorough Perswasion about Truths crossing our sensual Conceits, and controuling our peevish Humours; unto a perfect Submission of our Understanding, and Resignation of our Will to whatever God teacheth or prescribeth; to a firm Resolution of adhering to that Profession, which exacteth of us so much Pains, and exposeth us to so many Troubles. 1 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Thes. 1. 11. John 6. 29.

Charity is also a laborious Exercise of many good Works, and he that will practise it, must in divers ways labour hardly; He must labour in voiding from his Soul many Dispositions deeply radicated therein by Nature, Opinion and Custom, (Envy, Frowardness, Stubbornness, perverse and vain Selfishness, from whence Wrath, Revenge, Spite and Malice do spring forth:) He must labour in effectual Performance of all good Offices, and in catching all Occasions of doing good; He must exert that κόπον ἀγάπης, that *labour of love*, whereof St. *Paul* doth speak; He must (as that holy *Apostle* directeth, not only in Precept, but by his own Practice) work with his own Hands, that he may supply the Wants of his Neighbour. Gal. 6. 10. 1 Thes. 1. 3. Heb. 6. 10. Eph. 4. 28. Act. 20. 35.

Hope it self (which one would think, when grounded well, should be no less easie than pleasant Duty) doth need much Labour to preserve it safe, streight and stable, among the many Waves and Billows of Temptation assaying to shake and subvert it; whence a *patience of hope* is recommended to us; and we so often are exhorted to hold it fast, to keep it sure, firm and unshaken to the end. Ἀκλινῆ. Heb. 10. 23. Heb. 6. 19. 1 Thes. 1. 3. Heb. 10. 36. Heb. 6. 11. Ἐνδείκνυσθαι σπουδήν. Heb. 3. 6, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Temperance also surely demandeth no small Pains; it being no slight Business to check our greedy Appetites, to shun the Enticements of Pleasure, to escape the Snares of Company and Example, to support the Ill-Will and Reproaches of those Zealots and Bigots for Vice; who cannot tolerate any Non-conformity to their Extravagancies; but (as St. *Peter* doth express it) *think it strange, if others do not run with them to the same excess of riot, speaking ill of them for it.* Πάντες ἐξ ἑνὸς στόματος ὑμνοῦσιν ὡς καλὸν μὲν ἡ σωφροσύνη τε καὶ δικαιοσύνη, χαλεπὸν μέν τοι καὶ ὀπίπονον. Plat. de Rep. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 4.

What should I speak of *Meekness*, of *Patience*, of *Humility*, of *Contentedness*? Is it not manifest how laborious those Vertues are, and what Pains are necessary in the obtaining, in the Exercise of them? what Pains, I say, they require in the Voidance of fond Conceits, in the Suppression of froward Humours, in the quelling fierce Passions, in the brooking grievous Crosses and Adversities, in the bearing heinous Injuries and Affronts?

Thus

Thus doth all Vertue require much Industry, and it therefore necessarily must it self be a great Vertue, which is the Mother, the Nurse, the Guardian of all Vertues; yea, which indeed is an Ingredient and constitutive Part of every Vertue; for if Vertue were easily obtainable or practicable without a good measure of Pains, how could it be Vertue? what Excellency could it have, what Praise could it claim, what Reward could it expect? God hath indeed made the best things not easily obtainable, hath set them high out of our Reach, to exercise our Industry in getting them, that we might raise up our selves to them, that being obtained, they may the more deserve our Esteem, and his Reward.

Lastly, the Sovereign Good, the last Scope of our Actions, the Top and Sum of our Desires; *Happiness* it self, or *Eternal Life* in perfect Rest, Joy and Glory; although it be the supreme Gift of God, and special *Boon* of divine Grace (τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, *But* saith St. *Paul*, *the gift of God's grace is eternal life*) yet it also by God himself is declared to be the Result and Reward of Industry; for we are commanded *to work out our salvation with fear and trembling*; and to *give diligence in making our calling and election sure*, by vertuous Practice, and *God* (saith St. *Paul*) *will render to every man according to his works, to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek Glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; and, in the Close of God's Book it is proclaimed, as a Truth of greatest Moment, and special Point of God's Will, *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* It is plainly Industry, which climbeth the holy *Mount*; it is Industry which taketh *the Kingdom of Heaven by force*; it is Industry, which *so runneth as to obtain* the Prize; which so fighteth as *to receive the Crown*; which so *watcheth* as to secure our everlasting Interest to us.

Rom. 6. 23. Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 2. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 10. Rom. 2. 6, 7. 10. 6, 22. Apoc. 22. Heb. 12. 22. Mat. 11. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 24. Jac. 1. 12. Mat. 24. 42. 25. 13. Luc. 12. 37. Apoc. 3. 3.

Thus do the choicest good Things, of which we are capable, spring from Industry, or depend upon it; and no considerable Good can be attained without it; thus all the Gifts of God are by it conveyed to us, or are rendred in effect beneficial to us; for the Gifts of Nature are but Capacities which it improveth; the Gifts of Fortune or Providence are but Instruments, which it imployeth to our Use; the Gifts of Grace are the Supports and Succours of it; and the very Gift of Glory is its Fruit and Recompence.

There are farther several other material Considerations, and weighty Motives to the Practice of this Duty; which Meditation hath suggested to me; but these in regard to your Patience, must suffice at present; the other (together with an Application proper to our Condition and Calling) being reserved to another Occasion.

SER-

SERMON XIX.

Of Induſtry in general.

ECCLES. IX. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

Induſtry, which the Divine *Preacher* in this *Text* recommendeth to us, is a Vertue of a very diffuſive Nature and Influence; ſtretching it ſelf through all our Affairs, and twiſting it ſelf with every Concern we have; ſo that no Buſineſs can be well managed, no Deſign accompliſhed, no Good obtained without it: It therefore behoveth us to conceive a high Opinion of it, and to inure our Souls to the Practice of it, upon all Occaſions: In furtherance of which Purpoſes I formerly not long ſince, did propound ſeveral Motives and Inducements; and now proceeding on, ſhall repreſent divers other Conſiderations ſerviceable to the ſame End.

1. We may conſider that Induſtry is productive of Eaſe it ſelf, and preventive of Trouble: It was no leſs ſolidly, than acutely and ſmartly adviſed by the Philoſopher *Crates*: *Whether* (ſaid he) *labour be to be choſen, labour; or whether it be to be eſchewed, labour; that thou mayeſt not labour; for by not labouring, labour is not eſcaped, but is rather purſued*; and St. *Chryſoſtome* doth upon the ſame Conſideration urge Induſtry, becauſe *Sloth* (ſaith he) *is wont to ſpoil us, and to yield us much pain*; No Man can cozen Nature, eſcaping the Labour to which he was born; but rather attempting it, will delude himſelf, then finding moſt, when he ſhunneth all Labour.

Εἰ δ' αἱρετὸν ὁ πόνος, πόνει· εἰ δὲ φευκτὸν, πόνει, ἵνα μὴ πονῇς· διὰ γὰρ τοῦ μὴ πονεῖν οὐ φεύγεται πόνος, πρὸς δὲ ἐναντίῳ καὶ διώκεται, Crates, *Ep.* 4.

Ἡ ἀργία διαφθείρειν ἡμᾶς εἰωθε, καὶ πολὺν παρέχει τὸν πόνον. Chryſ. *in Joh. Orat.* 36.

Sloth indeed doth affect Eaſe and Quiet; but by affecting them doth loſe them; It hateth Labour and Trouble, but by hating them, doth incur them; It is a ſelf-deſtroying Vice, not ſuffering thoſe who cheriſh it, to be idle, but creating much Work, and multiplying Pains unto them; engaging them into divers Neceſſities and Streights, which they cannot ſupport with Eaſe, and out of which without extream Trouble they cannot extricate themſelves: Of this the *Preacher* doth afford us a plain Inſtance; *By much ſlothfulneſs* (ſaith he) *the building decayeth, and through idleneſs of the hands the houſe droppeth through*; A little Care taken at firſt about repairing the Houſe, would have ſaved its Decay and Ruin; and conſequently the vaſt Charge and Trouble, becoming needful to re-edifie it: And the like doth happen in moſt other Caſes and Occurrences of Life: Idleneſs commonly doth let ſlip Opportunities and Advantages, which cannot with Eaſe be retrieved; it letteth things fall into a bad Caſe, out of which they can hardly be recovered. Eccleſ. 10. 18.

The

The certain Conſequences of it (Diſgrace, Penury, want of Experience; diſobliging and loſing Friends, with all the like Miſchiefs) cannot be ſupported without much Diſquiet; and they diſable a Man from redreſſing the Inconveniences into which he is plunged.

But Induſtry by a little voluntary Labour taken in due Place and Seaſon, doth ſave much neceſſary Labour afterward, and by moderate Care doth prevent intolerable Diſtreſs; and the Fruits of it (Wealth, Reputation, Skill and Dexterity in Affairs, Friendſhips, all Advantages of Fortune) do enable a Man to paſs his Life with great Eaſe, Comfort and Delight.

2. Induſtry doth beget Eaſe by procuring good Habits, and Facility of acting things expedient for us to do. By taking Pains to day we ſhall need leſs Pains to Morrow; and by continuing the Exerciſe, within a while we ſhall need no Pains at all, but perform the moſt difficult Tasks of Duty, or of Benefit to us with perfect Eaſe, yea commonly with great Pleaſure. What ſluggiſh People account hard and irkſome (as to riſe early, to hold cloſe to Study, or Buſineſs, to bear ſome Hardſhip) will be natural and ſweet; as proceeding from another Nature, raiſed in us by Uſe.

Induſtry doth breed Aſſurance and Courage, needful for the undertaking and Proſecution of all neceſſary Buſineſs, or for the Performance of all Duties incumbent on us.

No Man can quite decline Buſineſs, or diſengage himſelf from Duty, without infinite Damage and Miſchief accruing to himſelf; but theſe an induſtrious Man (confiding in this efficacious Quality) will ſet upon with Alacrity, and Diſpatch with Facility, his Diligence voiding Obſtacles and ſmoothing the way to him; whenas Idleneſs finding ſome Difficulties, and fanſying more, ſoon diſhearteneth, and cauſeth a Man to deſiſt from Action, rather chuſing to crouch under the Burthen, than by Endeavour to carry it through, to diſcharge himſelf thereof: Whence as to an Induſtrious Man things ſeeming difficult will prove eaſie, ſo to a ſlothful Perſon the eaſieſt things will appear impoſſible; according to *Solomon*'s Obſervation: *The way* (ſaith he) *of* * *a ſlothful man is an hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is made plain*; whereas a ſlothful Man, being apt to neglect his Obligations, is oppoſed to an upright Man, who hath a conſcionable regard to them, and is willing to take Pains in the Diſcharge of them: So it is declared, that to the one the way is rough and thorny, to the other beaten and expedite.

* עצל.
Prov. 15. 19.
* Ὁδοὶ ἀνεργῶν ἐστρωμμέναι, αἱ δὲ τῶν ἀνδρείων τετριμμέναι.

And again, *The ſlothful man* (ſaith he) *doth ſay, there is a Lion without, I ſhall be ſlain in the ſtreets*; he is very apt to conceit, or to pretend imaginary Difficulties and Hazards, and thence to be deterred from going about his Buſineſs, or doing his Duty. This Conſideration of S. *Chryſoſtome* doth propoſe, exciting to an earneſt Purſuit of Vertue; becauſe *There is* (ſaith he) *nothing ſo eaſie which our great ſloth doth not repreſent very grievous and burthenſome; nothing ſo painful and difficult, which Diligence and willingneſs do not ſhew to be very eaſie.*

Prov. 22. 13. 26. 13.
Πεφοβαίζεται ὁ λέγει ὀκνηρὸς, Λέων ἐν τῇ ὁδοῖς, ἐν τῇ πλατείαις φονευτά.

Οὐδέν ἐστιν οὕτως ὂν ῥᾴδιον, ὃ μὴ σφόδρα βαρὺ καὶ ἐπαχθὲς ὁ πολὺς δείκνυσιν ὀκνηρὸς ἡμῶν ὥσπερ ὀλίγπονον καὶ οὐ δυσχερὲς ὃ μὴ λίαν εὔχολον ἢ πανδεᾶ καὶ οὐ προθυμίας. Chryſ. Tom. 6. Or. 15. p. 144.

Τὰ μὲν ῥᾴδια τοὺς ἀμελοῦντας φεύγει, τὰ δὲ χαλεπὰ ὑπομελείαις ἁλίσκεται. Plut. de Educ.

3. We may conſider that Induſtry will ſweeten all our Enjoyments, and ſeaſon them with a grateful Reliſh; for as no Man can well enjoy himſelf, or find ſound Content in any thing, while Buſineſs or Duty lie unfiniſhed on his Hand; ſo when he hath done his beſt toward the Diſpatch of his Work, he will then comfortably take his Eaſe, and enjoy his Pleaſure; then his Food doth taſt ſavourily, then his Divertiſements and Recreations have

have a lively Gustfulness, then his Sleep is very sound and pleasant, according to that of the *Preacher*, *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet.* Eccles. 5. 12. Τῷ δόλῳ.

4. Especially those Accommodations prove most delightful, which our Industry hath procured to us; we looking on them with a special Tenderness of Affection, as on the Children of our Endeavour; we being sensible at what Costs of Care and Pain we did purchase them. If a Man getteth Wealth by Fraud or Violence, if he riseth to Preferment by Flattery, Detraction, or any bad Arts, he can never taste any good Savour, or find sound Comfort in them; Aud from what cometh merely by chance, as there is no Commendation due, so much Satisfaction will not arise: 'Tis the *Wise-man*'s Observation, *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*, and therefore it cannot be very grateful to him; but (addeth he) *the substance of a diligent man is precious*; that is, what a Man compasseth by honest Industry, that he is apt highly to prize; he triumpheth in it, and (in St. *Paul*'s Sense innocently) boasteth of it; he feeleth a solid Pleasure, and a pure Complacency therein; the manner of getting it doth more please him than the thing it self; as true Hunters do love the Sport more than the Quarry, and generous Warriours more rejoice in the Victory than in the Spoil; For *our soul* (as St. *Chrysostome* discourseth) *is more affected with those things, for which it hath laboured; for which Reason* (addeth he) *God hath mix'd Labours with Vertue it self, that he might endear it to us.* *Cui sit conditio dulcis sine pulvere palmæ?* Hor. *Ep. l.* 1. Prov. 12. 27. 1 Cor. 9. 15. Περὶ ἐκεῖνα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διάκειται, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔκαμε· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πόνους ἀνέμιξεν ἀρετῇ οἰκειῶσαι αὐτῇ ταῦτα. Ευλόμῳ. Chrys. *in* Joh. *Orat.* 36.

Yea, farther,

5. The very Exercise of Industry immediately in it self is delightful, and hath an innate Satisfaction which tempereth all Annoyances, and even ingratiateth the Pains going with it.

The very Settlement of our Mind on fit Objects, or its Acquiescence in determinate Action, conducing to a good End, whereby we are freed of Doubt, Distraction, and fastidious Littlesness, doth minister Content.

The Reflexion upon our having embraced a wise Choice, our Proceeding in a fair Way, our being in chace of a good Purpose, doth breed Complacence.

To consider that we are spending our time accomptably, and improving our Talents to good Advantage (to the Service of God, the Benefit of our Neighbour, the bettering of our own State) is very chearing and comfortable.

And whereas *In all Labour* (as the *Wise-man* telleth us) *there is profit*, the Foresight of that Profit affordeth Pleasure, the foretasting the good Fruits of our Industry is very delicious. Prov. 14. 23.

Hope indeed doth ever wait on Industry: And what is more delightful than Hope? This is the Incentive, the Support, the Condiment of all honest Labour; in Virtue whereof the Husbandman toileth, the Merchant trudgeth, the Scholar ploddeth, the Soldier dareth with Alacrity and Courage, not resenting any Pains, not regarding any Hazards which attend their Undertakings: This the holy *Apostles* tell us did enable them with Joy to sustain all their painful Work, and hazardous Warfare; enjoining us also as to *work with fear*, so to *rejoice in hope*.

1 Cor. 9. 10.
——*ipsa operis difficultate lætus spem segetis de labore metitur, Apud* Aug. *Ep.* 142.
Rom. 12. 12. 5. 2. Heb. 3. 6.
1 Tim. 4. 10. Col. 1. 5.
2 Cor. 3. 12. 1 John 3. 3.
Pet. 1. 3. Tit. 2. 13.

In fine, Industry doth free us from great Displeasure, by redeeming us from the Molestations of Idleness, which is the most tedious and irksome thing in the World, racking our Soul with anxious Suspence, and perplexing Distraction; starving it for want of satisfactory Entertainment, or causing it to feed on its own Heart by doleful Considerations; infesting it

Otio qui nescit uti plus habet negotii, &c.——
Otioso in otio animus nescit quid quidem velit, &c. Ennius *apud* Agel. 19. 10.

with Crowds of frivolous melancholick, troublesome stinging Thoughts; galling it with a Sense of our squandring away precious time, of our slipping fair Opportunities, of our not using the Abilities and Advantages granted us, to any Profit or Fruit: Whence St. *Chrysostome* saith very truly, that *there is nothing more unpleasant, more painful, more miserable than a Man that hath nothing to do: Is not this* (saith he) *worse than ten thousand Chains, to hang in suspence, and be continually gaping, looking on those who are present?* Indeed the strictest Imprisonment is far more tolerable, than being under Restraint by a lazy Humour from profitable Employment: This enchaineth a Man, hand and foot, with more than Iron Fetters: This is beyond any Imprisonment; It is the very Entombment of a Man, quite in Effect sequestring him from the World, or debarring him from any valuable Concerns therein. And if Liberty be ἐξουσία αὐτοπραγίας, *a power of doing what one liketh best*; then is he, who by his Sloth is disabled from doing any thing wherein he can find any reasonable Satisfaction, the veriest Slave that can be; from which Slavery Industry freeing us, and disposing us to perform chearfully whatever is convenient, thereby doeth us a great Pleasure. Farther,

Καὶ τί ἀνιαρότερον γένοιτ' ἂν ἀνθρώπῳ ἀργὸν ἔχοντι καὶ ποιεῖν; τί μοχθηρότερον; τί ταλαιπωρότερον; μυρίων ἐστὶ χεῖρον τὸ δεσμῶν, χαλεπῶν καὶ κεχλωσμένων διαπαντὸς ὅτι τὰ ἀγαθὰ καθήμενον, ὁρῶντα τοὺς παρόντας, Chrys. *in* Act. *Or.* 35.

Otium est vivi hominis sepultura.

6. Let us consider, that Industry doth afford a lasting Comfort, deposited in the Memory and Conscience of him that practiseth it. It will ever upon his reviewing the Passages of his Life, be sweet to him to behold in them Testimonies and Monuments of his Diligence; it will please him to consider, that he hath lived to purpose, having done somewhat considerable! that he hath made an advantageous use of his time; that he hath well husbanded the Talents committed to him; that he hath accomplish'd (in some measure) the Intents of God's Bounty, and made some Return for his excellent Gifts. What Comfort indeed can any Man have, yea, how sore Remorse must he feel in reflecting upon a Life spent in unfruitful and unprofitable Idleness? How can he otherwise than bewail his Folly and Baseness in having lived (or rather having only been) in vain; as the Shadow and Appearance of a Man; in having lavished his Days, in having buried his Talents, in having imbezilled his Faculties of Nature, and his Advantages from Providence; in having defeated the good Will of God, and endeavour'd no Requital to the munificent Goodness of his Maker, of his Preserver, his benign Lord and Master, his gracious Saviour and Redeemer? how without Confusion, can he in his Mind revolve, that he hath no-wise benefited the World, and profited his Neighbour, or obliged his Friends, or rendred to his Country, (to the Society, or Community of which he is a Member) amends for all the Safety and Quiet, the Support, the Convenience, and the Pleasure he hath enjoyed under its Protection, and in its Bosom? that he hath not born a competent Share in the common Burthens, or paid a due Contribution of his Care and Labour to the publick Welfare? How can such a Man look inward upon himself with a favourable Eye, or pardon himself for so loathsome Defaults?

Diu fuit, non diu vixit.

Matth. 25. 26.

7. Let us consider, that Industry doth argue a generous and ingenuous Complection of Soul.

It implieth a Mind not content with mean and vulgar things (such as Nature dealeth to all, or Fortune scattereth about) but aspiring to things of high worth, and pursuing them in a brave Way, with adventurous Courage, by its own Forces, through Difficulties and Obstacles.

It signifieth in a Man a Heart, not enduring to owe the Sustenance or Convenience of his Life to the Labour or the Liberality of others; to pilfer a Live-

a Livelihood from the World; to reap the Benefit of other Mens Care and Toil, without rendring a full Compenſation, or out-doing his private Obligations by conſiderable Service and Beneficence to the Publick.

A noble Heart will diſdain to ſubſiſt like a Drone upon the Hony gathered by others Labour; like a Vermin to filch its Food out of the publick Granary; or like a Shark to prey on the leſſer Fry; but will one way or other earn his Subſiſtence: For he that doth not earn, can hardly own his Bread, as St. *Paul* implieth, when he ſaith, *Them that are ſuch we command and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work, and eat their own bread.* 2 Theſſ. 3. 12. Τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον.

Of this generous Ingenuity we have a notable Inſtance in that great *Apoſtle* himſelf; which he doth often repreſent as a Pattern to us, profeſſing much Complacence therein; He with all Right and Reaſon might have challenged a comfortable Subſiſtence from his Diſciples, in recompence for the incomparable Benefits he did confer on them, and of the exceſſive Pains he did endure for their Good; this he knew well, but yet did rather chuſe to ſupport himſelf by his own Labour, than any wiſe to ſeem burthenſome or troubleſome to them: *Theſe hands* (ſaid he) *have miniſtred to my neceſſities, and to them that are with me; I have ſhewed you all things, that ſo labouring ye ought to ſupport the weak, and to remember the words of our Lord Jeſus, how he ſaid, It is more bleſſed to give than to receive.* This was the Practice of him, who was in *Labours moſt abundant*; and ſuch is the *Genius* of every Man, who upon Principles of Conſcience, Reaſon and Honour, is induſtrious. Of him it may be ſaid, as of *Solomon's* good Houſewife; *She ſeeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; ſhe is like the merchants ſhip, ſhe bringeth her food from afar; ſhe looketh well to her houſhold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs.* 1 Cor. 9. 15. 2 Theſſ. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 9. 11. 1 Theſſ. 2. 6. Acts 20. 34, 35. 18. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 9. 2 Theſſ. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Prov. 31. 13, 14, 27.

Sloth is a baſe Quality, the Argument of a Mind wretchedly degenerate and mean; which is content to grovel in a deſpicable State; which aimeth at no worthy thing, nor purſueth any thing in a laudable way; which diſpoſeth a Man to live *gratis* (precariouſly) and ingratefully on the publick Stock, as an inſignificant Cypher among Men, as a Burthen of the Earth, as a Wen of any Society; ſucking aliment from it, but yielding no Benefit or Ornament thereto.

8. Induſtry is a Fence to Innocence and Vertue; a Bar to all kind of Sin and Vice, guarding the Avenues of our Heart keeping off the Occaſions and Temptations to vicious Practice. When a Man is engaged in honeſt Employment, and ſeriouſly intent thereon, his Mind is prepoſſeſſed and filled, ſo that there is no room or vacancy for ill thoughts, or baſe Deſigns to creep in; his Senſes do not lie open to enſnaring Objects; he wants Leiſure and Opportunity of granting Audience to the Sollicitations of ſinful Pleaſure; and is apt to anſwer them with a *non vacat*; the Devil can hardly find Advantage of tempting him, at leaſt many Devils cannot get Acceſs to him, according to that Obſervation in *Caſſian*, *A working Monk is aſſaulted by one Devil, but an idle one is ſpoiled by numberleſs bad Spirits.* The Caſe of Men ordinarily is like to that of *Ægyſthus*.

Semper te diabolus inveniat occupatum. Bern. *form. hom. v. cap. 7.*

Operans monachus uno dæmone pulſatur, otioſus verò innumeris Spiritibus devaſtatur, Caſſ. *de Inſtit.* 10. 23.

—*ne nil ageretur, amavit,* Ovid *de Remed.*

rather than do nothing, he was ready to do ill; he not having Buſineſs to employ his Thoughts, wanton Deſires did inſinuate themſelves into his Heart, and tranſported him to that diſaſtrous Wickedneſs, which ſupplied Matter to ſo many Tragedies: And the like Inſtance the *Sacred Hiſtory* ſuggeſted in King *David*, who *walking* ('tis ſaid) *on the roof of his houſe,* 2 Sam. 11. 2.

his Mind then roving, and being untacked from honeſt Cares, that Temptation ſeized on him, whereby he was plunged into that woful Miſdemeanour, which did create to him ſo much Sorrow, did make ſuch a ſpot in his Life, and leave ſuch a Blur on his Memory, whence yet we may draw ſome Benefit, taking it as a profitable Document and Warning, how Idleneſs doth expoſe the beſt Men to Danger.

Idleneſs is indeed the Nurſery of Sins, which as naturally grow up therein as Weeds in a neglected Field, or Inſects in a ſtanding Puddle;

Eccelus. 33. 27. *Idleneſs teacheth much evil.* It is the general Trap, whereby every Tempter aſſayeth to catch our Soul: For the Mind being looſe from Care, Satan is ready to ſtep in with his Suggeſtions, the World preſenteth its Allurements, fleſhly Deſires riſe up; proud, froward, wanton Cogitations ſlip in; ill Company doth entice, ill Example is regarded, every Temptation doth object and impreſs it ſelf with great Advantage and Force; Men in ſuch a caſe being apt to cloſe and comply with Temptations, even to divert their Mind, and entertain themſelves, to cure their Liſtleſneſs, to paſs their time, committing Sin, for want of better Occupation. Hence in Places, where there is leaſt Work, the worſt Sins do moſt prevail; and Idleneſs therefore was by the Prophet reckoned one of the three great Sins of *Sodom*, Parents of the reſt: *Behold* (ſaith *Ezekiel*) *this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter Sodom; pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her:* Hence it ſeldom doth happen in any way of Life, that a Sluggard and a Rake-hell do not go together, or that he who is idle, is not alſo diſſolute.

——ſi non
Intendes animum ſtudiis, & rebus honeſtis,
Invidia vel amore vigil torquebere ——
Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Ezek. 16. 49.

9. Particularly Induſtry doth prevent the Sins of vain Curioſity, Pragmaticalneſs, troubleſome Impertinency, and the like Peſts of common Life, into which Perſons not diligently following their own Buſineſs, will aſſuredly fall. *We hear* (ſaith St. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*) *that there are ſome who walk among you diſorderly, working not at all, but are buſie-bodies;* 'tis no wonder, if they did *not work at all*, that they ſhould *walk diſorderly*; or that quite neglecting their own Concerns, they ſhould περιεργάζεσθαι, *overwork*, or be too buſie in matters not belonging to them, intruding themſelves into the Affairs of their Neighbours: For there is a natural Connection between theſe things, ſince every Man muſt be thinking, muſt be doing, muſt be ſaying ſomewhat, to ſpend his Leiſure, to uphold Converſation, to pleaſe himſelf and gratifie others, to appear ſomebody among his Companions: to avoid the Shame of being quite out of Employment: Wherefore not having the Heart to mind his own Affairs, he will take the Boldneſs to meddle with the Concerns of other Men: If he cannot have the Subſtance, he will ſet up an Idol of Buſineſs, and ſeem very active in his Impertinency. In order thereto, being curiouſly inquiſitive, and prying into the Diſcourſe, Actions and Affairs of all Men. This Men are apt to do in their own Defence: and beſides, Idleneſs doth put Men into a looſe, gariſh, wanton Humour, diſpoſing them without Heed or Regard to meddle with any thing, to prattle at any rate. In fine, whoever hath no Work at home, will be gadding to ſeek Entertainment abroad, like thoſe Goſſips of whom St. *Paul* ſaith, *They learn to be idle, wandring about from houſe to houſe; and not only idle, but tatlers alſo, and buſie bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not:* If indeed we conſider, all the frivolous and petulant Diſcourſe, the impertinent Chattings, the raſh Cenſures, the ſpiteful Detractions which are ſo rife in the World, and ſo much Poiſon all Converſation, we ſhall find the main Root of them to be a want of Induſtry

2 Theſſ. 3. 11. Μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους, Working nothing, but overworking.

1 Tim. 5. 3.

duſtry in Men, or of diligent Attendance on their own Matters; which would ſo much take up their Spirit and time, that they would have little Heart or Leiſure to ſearch into, or comment upon other Mens Actions and Concerns.

10. Let us conſider that Induſtry is needful in every Condition and Station, in every Calling and way of Life, in all relations, for our good Behaviour, and right Diſcharge of our Duty in them. Without it we cannot in any ſtate act decently, or uſefully, either to the Benefit and Satisfaction of others, or to our own Advantage and Comfort.

Are we rich? then is Induſtry requiſite for keeping and ſecuring our Wealth, for managing it wiſely, for employing it to its proper Uſes, and beſt Advantages; (in the ſervice of God, in Beneficence to our Neighbour, in advancing publick Good) ſo that we may render a good Accompt to him who hath entruſted us with the Stewardſhip thereof: Induſtry is very needful to guard us from the Temptations and Miſchiefs to which Wealth doth expoſe us, that it do not prove a treacherous Snare, an unweildy Burthen, a deſtructive Poiſon and Plague to us, throwing us into Pride and Vanity, into Luxury, into Stupidity, into diſtracting Solicitude, into a baſe worldly and earthly temper of Heart, into a prophane Oblivion of God, and of our own Souls.

Are we in conſpicuous Rank of Dignity, or in Honour and Repute among Men? then is Induſtry requiſite to keep us faſt in that State, to hold us from tumbling from that Pinacle down into extream Diſgrace; for then all Eyes are upon us, ſtrictly obſerving what we do, and ready to paſs Cenſure on our Actions; ſo that great Diligence is neceſſary to approve our ſelves, and ſhun Obloquy. Nothing is more brittle than Honour, every little thing hitting on it, is able to break it, and therefore without exceeding Care we cannot preſerve it; Nothing is more variable or fickle than the Opinions of Men (wherein Honour conſiſteth) it is therefore no eaſie matter to fix or detain them in the ſame Place. *Vitrea fama* Hor. Eccl. 10. 1.

Honour cannot live without Food or Fuel; it muſt be nouriſhed by worthy Actions; without a continual Supply of them, it will decay, languiſh, and pine away: Induſtry therefore is required to keep it; and no leſs is neceſſary to uſe it well, in a due Subordination to God's Honour, and Reference to his Service, that inſtead of an Ornament and Convenience, it do not prove a baneful Miſchief to us; puffing up our Minds with vain Conceits and Complacencies, inclining us to Arrogance and Contempt of others, tempting us by aſſuming to our ſelves to rob God of his due Glory; to decline which Evils great Care is requiſite; we muſt have a ſteady Baſt, and we muſt hold the Rudder warily, when we carry ſo great Sail.

On the other hand, are we poor and low in the World; or do we lie under Diſgrace? then do we much need Induſtry to ſhun Extremities of Want and Ignominy; that we be not ſwallow'd up and overwhelm'd by Need or Contempt; to ſupport us under our Preſſures, to keep up our Spirits from Dejection and Diſconſolateneſs; to preſerve us from impious Diſcontentedneſs and Impatience: Induſtry is the only Remedy of that Condition, enabling us to get out of it, retrieving a Competence of Wealth or Credit; or diſpoſing us to bear it handſomely, and with Comfort; ſo as not to become forlorn or abject Wretches.

It is ſo needful to every Condition; and it is ſo for all Vocations; for,

Is a Man a Governour, or a Superiour in any Capacity? Then what is he but a publick Servant doom'd to continual Labour, hired for the Wages of Reſpect and Pomp to wait on his People; in providing for their Needs, protecting their Safety, preſerving their Peace and Welfare; where

is

is he but on a Stage, whereon he cannot well act his part, without vigilant Attendance to his Charge, and conſtant Activity in performing all the Functions thereof? He is engag'd in great Obligations and Neceſſities of uſing extream Diligence, both in regard to himſelf and others. *Homer's* Deſcription of a Prince is a good one; *One who hath much People and many Cares committed to him:*

Ὦ λαοὶ τ' ὀπιτετράφαται, καὶ τόσα μέμηλε.

He muſt watchfully look to his own Steps, who is to guide others by his Authority and his Example. All his Actions require ſpecial Conduct, not only his own Credit and Intereſt, but the common Welfare depending thereon. He muſt heedfully adviſe what to do, he muſt diligently execute what he reſolveth on. He hath the moſt tickliſh things that can be (the Rights and Intereſts, the Opinions and Humours of Men) to manage. He hath his own Affections to curb and guide, that they be not perverted by any ſiniſter Reſpects, not ſwayed by any unjuſt Partiality, not corrupted by Flattery or Fear. He will find, that to wield Power innocently, to brandiſh the Sword of Juſtice diſcreetly and worthily, for the Maintenance of Right, and Encouragement of Vertue, for the Suppreſſion of Injury, and Correction of Vice is a matter of no ſmall Skill or ſlight Care.

Induſtry is indeed a Quality moſt proper for Perſons of high Rank and Dignity, or of great Power and Authority; who have ſpecial Opportunities to employ it in weighty Affairs to great Advantage; whoſe Undertakings being of vaſt moment do need anſwerable Efforts to move and guide them: The Induſtry of a Mechanick, or a Ruſtick, acting in a low and narrow Sphere can effect no great Matter, and therefore it ſelf need not to be great; but the Induſtry of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman may have a large and potent Influence, ſo as to render a Nation, a County, a Town, happy, proſperous, glorious, flouriſhing in Peace, in Plenty, in Vertue; it therefore for atchieving ſuch Purpoſes need be, and ſhould be proportionably great; a ſmall Power not being able to move a great Weight, nor a weak Cauſe to produce a mighty Effect. Wherefore *Cicero* recommending *Pompey* for a publick Charge, doth reckon theſe to be the *Imperatoriæ virtutes*, Qualities befitting a *Prince* or *General*, wherein he did excel, *labour in buſineſs*, *Valour in Dangers*, *Induſtry in acting*, *Nimbleneſs in Performance*, *Counſel in providing*.—— And *Alexander the Great*, reflecting on his Friends degenerating into Sloth and Luxury, told them, that *it was a moſt ſlaviſh thing to luxuriate, and a moſt royal thing to labour.*

Labor in negotio, fortitudo in periculis, induſtria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, conſilium in providendo, &c. Cic. *pro lege* Manil.

Δυσικώτατόν ὅτι τὸ τρυφᾶν, βασιλικώτατόν δὲ πονεῖν, Plut. *in* Alex. *p.* 1262.

And for thoſe who move in a lower Orb of Subjection or Service, I need not ſhew how needful Induſtry is for them: Who knoweth not that to be a good Subject, doth exact a careful Regard to the Commands of Superiours, and a painful Diligence in obſerving them? that to make a good Servant, Fidelity and Diligence muſt concur; whereof the firſt doth ſuppoſe the laſt, it being a part of Honeſty in a Servant to be diligent; whence δοῦλε πονηρὲ καὶ ὀκνηρὲ, *O thou wicked and ſlothful Servant*, were in the Goſpel well coupled; and the firſt Epithet was grounded on the ſecond, he being therefore wicked, becauſe he had been ſlothful.

Mat. 25. 26.

Neither can a Man be a true Friend, or a good Neighbour, or any-wiſe a good Relative, without Induſtry diſpoſing him to undergo Pains, in performing good Offices, whenever Need doth require, or Occaſion invite.

In fine, it is palpable, that there is no Calling of any ſort, from the Sceptre to the Spade, the Management whereof with any good Succeſs, any Credit, any Satisfaction doth not demand much Work of the Head, or of the Hand, or of both.

If

If Wit or Wisdom be the Head, if Honesty be the Heart, Industry is the Right Hand of every Vocation; without which the shrewdest Insight and the best Intention can execute nothing.

A Sluggard is qualified for no Office, no Calling, no Station among Men, he is a mere No-body; taking up room, pestering and clogging the World.

11. It also may deserve our Consideration, that it is Industry, whereto the publick State of the World, and of each Commonweal therein is indebted for its being, in all Conveniencies and Embellishments belonging to Life, advanc'd above rude and sordid Barbarism; yea whereto Mankind doth owe all that good Learning, that Morality, those Improvements of Soul, which elevate us beyond Brutes.

To industrious Study is to be ascribed the Invention and Perfection of all those Arts whereby Human Life is civilized, and the World cultivated with numberless Accommodations, Ornaments and Beauties.

All the comely, the stately, the pleasant, and useful Works, which we do view with Delight, or enjoy with Comfort, Industry did contrive them, Industry did frame them.

Industry reared those magnificent Fabricks, and those commodious Houses; it formed those goodly Pictures and Statues; it raised those convenient Causeys, those Bridges, those Aqueducts; it planted those fine Gardens with various Flowers and Fruits; it cloathed those pleasant Fields with Corn and Grass, it built those Ships, whereby we plough the Seas, reaping the Commodities of foreign Regions. It hath subjected all Creatures to our Command and Service, enabling us to subdue the fiercest, to catch the wildest, to render the gentler sort most tractable and useful to us. It taught us from the Wool of the Sheep, from the Hair of the Goat, from the Labours of the Silk-worm to weave us Cloaths to keep us warm, to make us fine and gay. It helpeth us from the inmost Bowels of the Earth to fetch divers needful Tools and Utensils.

It collected Mankind into Cities, and compacted them into orderly Societies, and devised wholsome Laws under shelter whereof we enjoy Safety and Peace, Wealth and Plenty, mutual Succour and Defence, sweet Conversation and beneficial Commerce.

It by Meditation did invent all those Sciences whereby our Minds are enriched and enabled, our Manners are refined and polished, our Curiosity is satisfied, our Life is benefited.

Ut varias usus meditando extunderet artes Paulatim, &c. Virg. *Georg.* I.

What is there, which we admire, or wherein we delight, that pleaseth our Mind, or gratifieth our Sense, for the which we are not beholden to Industry?

Doth any Country flourish in Wealth, in Grandeur, in Prosperity? it must be imputed to Industry, to the Industry of its Governours setling good Order, to the Industry of its People following profitable Occupations: So did *Cato*, in that notable *Oration* of his in *Sallust*, tell the *Roman* Senate, that it was not by the Force of their Arms, but by the Industry of their Ancestors that Commonwealth did arise to such a Pitch of Greatness. When Sloth creepeth in, then all things corrupt and decay; then the publick State doth sink into Disorder, Penury, and a disgraceful Condition.

Cato *apud* Sal. *in bello Catil.*

12. Industry is commended to us by all sorts of Example, deserving our Regard and Imitation. All Nature is a Copy thereof, and the whole World a Glass, wherein we may behold this Duty represented to us.

We may easily observe every Creature about us incessantly working toward the End for which it was designed, indefatigably exercising the Powers with which it is endued; diligently observing the Laws of its Cre-

Creation. Even Beings void of Reaſon, of Senſe, of Life it ſelf do ſuggeſt unto us Reſemblances of Induſtry; they being ſet in continual Action toward the effecting reaſonable Purpoſes, conducing to the Preſervation of their own Beings, or to the Furtherance of common Good.

The Heavens do rowl about with unwearied Motion, the Sun and Stars do perpetually dart their Influences; the Earth is ever labouring in the Birth and Nouriſhment of Plants; the Plants are drawing Sap, and ſprouting out Fruits and Seeds (to feed us, and propagate themſelves;) the Rivers are running, the Seas are toſſing, the Winds are bluſtering to keep the Elements ſweet, in which we live.

Prov. 6. 6. *Solomon* ſendeth us to the *Ant*, and biddeth us to *conſider her ways* (which *provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt*) many ſuch Inſtructers we may find in Nature; the like induſtrious Providence we may obſerve in every liviṅg Creature; we may ſee this running about, that ſwimming, another flying in Purveyance of its Food and Support.

If we look up higher to rational and intelligent Natures, ſtill more noble and appoſite Patterns do object themſelves to us.

Here below every Field, every Shop, every Street, the Hall, the Exchange, the Court it ſelf (all full of Buſineſs, and Fraught with the Fruits of Induſtry) do mind us how neceſſary Induſtry is to us.

If we conſult Hiſtory, we ſhall there find, that the beſt Men have been moſt induſtrious; that all great Perſons, renowned for heroical Goodneſs (the worthy *Patriarchs*, the holy *Prophets*, the bleſſed *Apoſtles*) were for this moſt commendable, that neglecting their private Eaſe, they did undertake difficult Enterprizes, they did undergo painful Labours for the benefit of Mankind, they did paſs their Days, like St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. 11. 27. ἐν κόποις καὶ μόχθοις: in *labours* and *toilſome pains* for thoſe Purpoſes.

Our great Example, the Life of our bleſſed Lord himſelf, what was it but one continual Exerciſe of Labour? His Mind did ever ſtand bent in careful Attention, ſtudying to do good; his Body was ever moving in wearisome Travel to the ſame Divine intent. Acts 10.

If we yet ſoar farther in our Meditation to the ſuperiour Regions we ſhall there find the bleſſed Inhabitants of Heaven, the Courtiers and Miniſters of God, very buſie and active; They do vigilantly wait on God's Throne in readineſs to receive and to diſpatch his Commands; they are ever on the Wing, and fly about like Lightning *to do his pleaſure*. They are attentive to our Needs, and ever ready to protect, to aſſiſt, to relieve us! Eſpecially, they are diligent Guardians, and Succourers of good Men; *officious ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for the heirs of ſalvation*; ſo even the Seat of perfect Reſt is no Place of Idleneſs.

Σῷ ϑ' ἱδρύνῳ πυρόεντι παρεστᾶσιν πολύμοχθοι Ἄγγελοι. Orph.

Pſ. 103. 21, 22. Pſal. 34. 8. 91. 11. Heb. 1. 14.

Yea, God himſelf, although immoveably and infinitely happy, is yet immenſely careful, and everlaſtingly buſie: He reſted once from that great Work of Creation; but yet *my father* (ſaith our Lord) *worketh ſtill*; and he never will reſt from his Works of Providence, and of Grace. His Eyes continue watchful over the World, and his Hands ſtretched out in upholding it. He hath a ſingular Regard to every Creature, ſupplying the Needs of each, and *ſatisfying the deſires of all.*

Gen. 2. 2. John 5. 27.

Pſal. 121. 3. 127. 1. Zech. 4. 10. 2 Chron. 16. 9.

O tu bone omnipotens, qui ſic curas unumquemque noſtrum tanquam ſolum cures, & ſic omnes tanquam ſingulos. Aug. Conf. 4. 11.

Pſal. 145. 15, 16. (Prov. 5. 21. 15. 3. Pſal. 34. 15. Gen. 31. 49. Jer. 31. 18.

And ſhall we alone be idle, while all things are ſo buſie? ſhall we keep our Hands in our Boſom, or ſtretch our ſelves on our Beds of Lazineſs, while all the World about us is hard at work, in purſuing the Deſigns of its Creation? Shall we be wanting to our ſelves, while ſo many things la-

labour for our Benefit? Shall not ſuch a Cloud of Examples ſtir us to ſome Induſtry, not to comply with ſo univerſal a Practice, to croſs all the World, to diſagree with every Creature, is it not very monſtrous and extravagant?

I ſhould cloſe all this Diſcourſe with that, at which, in pitching on this Subject I chiefly did aim, an Application exhortatory to our ſelves, urging the Practice of this Vertue by Conſiderations peculiar to us as Scholars, and derived from the Nature of our Calling; but the doing this, requiring a larger Diſcourſe than the time now will allow. I ſhall reſerve it to another Occaſion; adding only one Conſideration more.

13. Laſtly, if we conſider, we ſhall find the Root and Source of all the Inconveniences, the Miſchiefs, the Wants, of which we are ſo apt to complain, to be our Sloth; and that there is hardly any of them, which commonly we might not eaſily prevent or remove by Induſtry: Why is any Man a Beggar, why contemptible, why ignorant, why vicious, why miſerable? why, but for this one Reaſon, becauſe he is ſlothful! becauſe he will not labour to rid himſelf of thoſe Evils? What could we want, if we would but take the Pains to ſeek it, either by our Induſtry, or by our Devotion? for where the firſt will not do, the ſecond cannot fail, to procure any good thing from him, who giveth *to all men liberally*, and hath promiſed to ſupply the Defect of our Ability by his free Bounty; ſo that if we join theſe two Induſtries (induſtrious Action, and induſtrious Prayer) there is nothing in the World ſo good, or ſo great, of which, if we are capable, we may not aſſuredly become Maſters: And even for Induſtry it ſelf, eſpecially in the Performance of all our Duties towards God, let us induſtriouſly pray: Even ſo, *The God of peace ſanctifie us wholly; and make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleaſing in his ſight; through our bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, to whom for ever be all glory and praiſe.* Amen.

Jac. 1. 5. Δέησις ἐνεργουμένη. Jam. 5. 16. Προσκαρτέρησις. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12. Col. 4. 2. 1 Theſſ. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20.

SERMON XX.

Of Induſtry in our general Calling, as *Chriſtians.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in Buſineſs.

INduſtry is a very eminent Vertue, being an Ingredient (or the Parent) of all other Vertues, of conſtant uſe upon all Occaſions, and having Influence upon all our Affairs.

Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί. *Solicitudine non pigri.* Vulg.

For it is our Nature framed; all our Powers of Soul and Body being fitted for it, tending to it, requiring it for their Preſervation and Perfection.

We were designed for it in our first happy state; and upon our lapse thence were farther doomed to it, as the sole Remedy of our Needs and the Inconveniences to which we became exposed. For,

Without it we cannot well sustain or secure our Life in the Enjoyment of any Comfort or Convenience; we must work to earn our Food, our Cloathing, our Shelter; and to supply every Indigency of Accommodations, which our Nature doth crave.

To it God hath annexed the best and most desirable Rewards; Success to our Undertakings, Wealth, Honour, Wisdom, Vertue, Salvation; all which as they flow from God's Bounty, and depend on his Blessing; so from them they are usually convey'd to us through our Industry, as the ordinary Chanel and Instrument of attaining them.

It is requisite to us, even for procuring Ease, and preventing a Necessity of immoderate Labour.

It is in it self sweet and satisfactory; as freeing our Mind from Distraction, and wrecking Irresolution; as feeding us with good Hope, and yielding a Foretaste of its good Fruits.

It furnisheth us with Courage to attempt, and Resolution to atchieve things needful, worthy of us, and profitable to us.

It is attended with a good Conscience, and chearful Reflections of having well spent our time, and employed our Talents to good Advantage.

It sweeteneth our Enjoyments, and seasoneth our Attainments with a delightful Relish.

It is the Guard of Innocence, and barreth our Temptations to Vice, to Wantonness, to vain Curiosity and Pragmaticalness.

It argueth an ingenuous and generous Disposition of Soul; aspiring to worthy things, and pursuing them in the fairest Way; disdaining to enjoy the common Benefits, or the Fruits of other Men's Labour without deserving them from the World, and requiting it for them.

It is necessary for every Condition and Station, for every Calling, for every Relation; no Man without it being able to deport himself well in any State, to manage any Business, to discharge any sort of Duty.

To it the World is indebted for all the Culture, which advanceth it above rude and sordid Barbarism; for whatever in common Life is stately, or comely, or useful, Industry hath contrived it, Industry hath composed and framed it.

It is recommended to us by all sort of Patterns considerable; for all Nature is continually busie and active in Tendency toward its proper Designs; Heaven and Earth do work in unceſſant Motion; Every living Creature is employed in progging for its Sustenance; The blessed Spirits are always on the Wing in dispatching the Commands of God, and ministring Succour to us; God himself is ever watchful, and ever busie in preserving the World, and providing for the needs of every Creature.

The Lives of our *Blessed Saviour*, of all the *Patriarchs*, the *Prophets*, the *Apostles*, the *Saints* in this respect have been more exemplary; no Vertue being more conspicuous in their Practice than Industry in performing the hard Duties, and painful Tasks imposed on them for the Service of God, and the Benefit of Mankind.

Such is the Vertue upon which I have formerly discoursed in general and at large, but shall now more specially consider, according to St. *Paul's* Prescription; in reference to its most proper Matter, *Business*, explaining and pressing it accordingly.

Be not *slothful in business* (that is in discharge of it) or *to business* (that is to undertake it) this is the Rule; the Nature and Needfulness whereof we shall declare.

By πραγμα (*Business*) we may understand any Object of our Care and Endeavours which doth require them, and may deserve them; which by reason of its Difficulty cannot well be accomplished or attained without them; and which is productive of some Fruit or Recompence answerable to them; the which hath *operæ causam*, a need of Labour, and *operæ pretium*, some Effect worth our Pains; if it be not such it is not a due matter of vertuous and laudable Industry.

There are many things, about which Men with great Earnestness employ themselves, called Business, but not deserving that Name: There are divers spurious kinds of Industry, which may not pretend to Commendation, but rather do merit Blame; according to that of St. *Chrysostom*, *Labour which hath no Profit, cannot obtain any Praise.*

Πόνος ἀξὲν μέρος ἔχων ἐγκωμίου παντὸς ἀπεστέρηται. Chrysost. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 64.

There is a κενοσπουδία, a vain Industry, and a κακοσπουδία, a naughty Industry, both agreeing with genuine vertuous Industry in the Act, as implying careful and painful Activity, but discording from it in Object and Design; and consequently in worth, and moral Esteem.

Aliud agere, to be impertinently busie, doing that which conduceth to no good purpose, is in some respect worse than to do nothing, or to forbear all Action; For 'tis a positive Abuse of our Faculties, and trifling with God's Gifts; 'tis a throwing away Labour and Care, things valuable in themselves; 'tis often a running out of the way, which is worse than standing still; 'tis a debasing our Reason, and declining from our Manhood, nothing being more fooliſh or childish, than to be solicitous and serious about Trifles: For who are more busie and active than Children, who are fuller of Thoughts and Designs, or more eager in Prosecution of them than they? But all is about ridiculous Toys, the Shadows of Business, suggested to them by Apish Curiosity, and Imitation. Of such Industry we may understand that of the *Preacher*, *The labour of the fooliſh wearieth every one of them*; for that a Man soon will be weary of that Labour, which yieldeth no Profit, or beneficial Return.

Ἄλλῳ γὰρ ἀξίνῃ φιλοπόνως τις κινδυσπουδὸν θεὶς ὁμῶς ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ὄντα πολλάκις, ἢ τῷ τὰ λυσιτελῆ ἀναφελῆ πονεῖν καὶ διαφθορᾶς, ἢ ἕνεκά τοῦ μὴ συμφερόντων καὶ λυσιτελῶν, Plut *de commun. not.* p. 1949.

Σπουδάζειν καὶ πονεῖν παιδιᾶς χάριν ἀλίθιον φαίνεται καὶ λίαν παιδικόν. Arist. *Eth.* 10. 6.

Ἡ δὲ μικροῖς σπουδὴ μέμψιν φέρει. Plut. *ibid.*

Vid. de glor. Ath. p. 621.

Οἱ σπουδάζοντες ἐν τοῖς γελοίοις, ἐν τοῖς σπουδαίοις ἔσονται καταγέλαστοι. Cat. Maj. *apud* Plut. *in Apoph.*

Eccles. 10. 15.

But there is another Industry worse than that, when Men are very busie in devising and compassing Mischiefs; an Industry whereof the Devil affordeth a great Instance; for the cursed Fiend is very diligent, ever watching for Occasions to supplant us, ever plotting *Methods* and Means to do harm, ever driving on his mischievous Designs with unwearied Activity; *going to and fro in the earth; running about as a roaring Lion*, looking for Prey, and *seeking whom he may devour.*

Luke 22. 31. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Job 1. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

And his wicked Brood are commonly like him, being *workers of iniquity*, οἱ πονηροὶ, *painful Men*, οἱ πολυπράγμονες, Men that will do all things; who will spare no Pains, nor leave any stone unturned, for satisfying their Lusts, and accomplishing their bad Designs.

Ἐργάται τῆς ἀδικίας. Luke 13. 27. Psal. 6. 8.

So indeed it is, that as no great Good, so neither can any great Mischief be effected without much Pains: And if we consider either the Characters or the Practices of those, who have been famous Mischief-doers, the Pests of Mankind, and Disturbers of the World, we shall find to have been no Sluggards.

Catiline, Marius, Stilico, Cæsar, &c.

These two sorts of vain and bad Industry the Prophet *Isaiah* seemeth to describe in those Words; *They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the spiders web*; of which Expressions one may denote mischievous, the other frivolous Diligence in Contrivance or Execution of naughty or vain Designs; and to them both that of the Prophet *Hosea* may be referred; *They have sowed the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind*; Guilt, Remorse, and Punishment being the Consequences of both. And of them both common Experience doth afford very frequent and obvious Instances, a great part of Human Life being taken up with them. For,

Isa. 59. 5.
Hos. 8. 7.
Eccluſ. 34. 2.
Prov. 22. 8.
Hos. 10. 13.

How assiduously intent and eager may we observe Men to be at Sports? how soon will they rise to go forth to them? with what Constancy and Patience will they toil in them all the Day? how indefatigable are they in riding or running about after a Dog or a Hawk, to catch a poor Beast or silly Bird?

How long will Men sit poring on their Games, dispensing with their Food and Sleep for it?

Συνείρουσι καὶ οἱ φιλόκυβοι νύκτας ἡμέρας ἄσιτοι καὶ ἄποτοι, καὶ ἡδονῆς ἡδονὴ πείθει. Lib. *Orat.* 31.

How long and serious Attention will Men yield to a wanton Play? how many Hours will they contentedly sit thereat? what Study will Men employ on Jests and impertinent Wit? how earnest will they be to satisfie their vain Curiosity?

How in such Cases do Men forget what they are doing, that Sport should be Sport, not Work; to divert and relax us, not to employ and busie us; to take off our Minds a little, not wholly to take them up; not to exhaust or tire our Spirits, but to refresh and chear them, that they may become more fit for grave and serious Occupations?

τῷ γὰρ ὄντι παίζοντα δεῖ παίζειν. Plut.

How painful will others be *in hewing them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water*; that is, in immoderate Pursuit of worldly Designs? how studiously will they plod, how restlessly will they trudge, what Carking and Drudgery will they endure in driving on Projects of Ambition and Avarice? What will not they gladly do or suffer, to get a little Preferment, or a little Profit? It was a common Practice of old, and sure the World is not greatly mended since the *Psalmist* did thus reflect, *Surely every man walketh in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.*

Jer. 2. 13.
Psal. 39. 6.

How many vigilant, and stout Pursuers are there of Sensuality, and riotous Excess; such as those of whom the Prophet speaketh, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them?*

Isa. 5. 11.

How busie (O Shame, O Misery; how fiercely busie) are some in accomplishing Designs of Malice and Revenge? how intent are some to overreach, to circumvent, to supplant their Neighbour? how sore Pains will some take to seduce, corrupt or debauch others? how active will some be in sowing Strifes, in raising Factions, in fomenting Disorders in the World? how many industrious Slaves hath the Devil, who will spare no pains about any kind of Work, which he putteth them to? how many like those of whom the *Wise-man* saith, *Their feet run to evil*, and are *swift in running to mischief*; *they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*

Ἐννοήσουσό πνα ὁ διάβολος ἐπίταξε, πῶς ὀπίπονα, πῶς ἐμμοχθᾶ, &c. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. 16.

Prov. 6. 8.
1. 16.

Now with all these Labourers we may well expostulate in the Words of the Prophet; *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?*

Isa. 55. 2.

Such

Such Labours are unworthy of Men, much less do they beseem Christians.

It becometh us not as rational Creatures to employ the excellent Gifts of our Nature, and noble Faculties of our high-born Soul, the Forces of our Mind, the Advantages of our Fortune, our precious time, our very Care and Labour vainly or unprofitably upon any thing base or mean; being that our Reason is capable of atchieving great and worthy things, we much debase it by stooping to regard Toys, we do extreamly abuse it by working Mischief.

Much more doth it misbecome us as Christians (that is, Persons devoted to so high a Calling, who have so worthy Employments assigned to us, so glorious Hopes, so rich Encouragements proposed to us for our Work) to spend our Thoughts and Endeavours on things impertinent to our great Design, or mainly thwarting it. Eph. 1. 18.

The proper Matter and Object of our Industry (those false ones being excluded) is true Business; or that which is incumbent on a Man to do, either in way of Duty, being required by God, or by Dictate of Reason, as conducing to some good Purpose; so that in Effect it will turn to accompt, and finally in Advantageous Return will pay him for his Labour of Mind or Body; that which the *Wise-man* did intend, when he advised, *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might*; whatever thy Hand findeth, that is, whatever by Divine Appointment (by the Command or Providence of God) or which upon rational Deliberation, doth occur as Matter of our Action; comprizing every good Purpose and reasonable Undertaking incident to us. Eccles. 9. 10.

But our Business, according to the Holy *Apostle*'s Intent, may be supposed especially to be the Work of our Calling; to which each Man hath a peculiar Obligation; and which therefore is most properly his Business, or ἰδία ὁδὸν emphatically, the *Business* allotted to him.

Now this Business, our Calling, is double; our general Calling, which is common to us all as Christians, and our particular Calling, which peculiarly belongeth to us, as placed in a certain Station, either in the Church or State. In both which Vocations that we are much obliged and concerned to be industrious, shall be now my Business to declare.

I. As to our general Calling (that *sublime*, that *heavenly*, that *holy* Vocation) in which by divine Grace, according to the Evangelical Dispensation, we are engaged, that necessarily requireth, and most highly deserveth from us a great measure of Industry; the Nature and Design of it requireth, the Fruit and Result of it deserveth our utmost Diligence; all Sloth is inconsistent with discharging the Duties, with enjoying the Hopes, with obtaining the Benefits thereof. For,

Ἡ ἄνω κλῆσις. Phil. 3. 14.
Κλῆσις ἐπουρανίου. Heb. 3. 1.
Ἁγία κλῆσις. 1 Tim. 19.
Eph. 1. 18. 2 Thess. 1. 11.

It is a State of continual Work, and is expressed in Terms importing abundant, incessant, intense Care and Pain; for to be indeed Christians, *We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling*; We must *by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour, and Immortality*. We must *walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work*. We must *be rich in good works*, and *filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God: We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*. Phil. 2. 12. Rom. 2. 7. Col. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Phil. 1. 11. John 15. 5, 8, 16.

We have a Soul to save, and *are appointed* εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας, *to make an acquist of salvation*. Jam. 3. 17. Eph. 2. 16. 1 Thess. 5. 9.

We

We have a Mind to improve with Vertue and Wiſdom, qualifying us for Entrance into Heaven, for Enjoyment of God's Favour, for Converſation with Angels.

1 Theſſ. 1. 9. Rom. 7. 6. 6. 22. Eph. 2. 19. As Chriſtians we are aſſumed to be Servants of God, and re-admitted into his Family, from which for our Diſloyalty we had been diſcarded; ſo that as he was our natural Lord, ſo he is now ſuch alſo by ſpecial Grace; who did make us, who doth maintain us, under whoſe Protection, and at whoſe Diſpoſal we ſubſiſt; whence we are obliged to be faithfully diligent in his Service; we muſt conſtantly wait upon him in devotional Addreſſes; we muſt carefully ſtudy to know his Pleaſure; we muſt endeavour exactly to perform his Will, and obey his Commands; we muſt ſtrive to advance his Glory, to promote his Intereſt, to improve all Talents and Advantages committed to us for thoſe Purpoſes; we muſt (as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it) *always abound in the work of the Lord.*

Eph. 5. 10. Rom. 12. 2. Luke 11. 28. Mat. 25. 27. 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Col. 3. 25. Eph. 6. 7. 1 Cor. 7. 23, 6, 20. Tit. 2. 14. We muſt alſo look upon our ſelves as Servants of Chriſt our Redeemer; who by his Blood hath purchaſed us to himſelf, that we might be *zealous of good works*; performing a Service to him, which conſiſteth in a faithful Diſcharge of manifold Duties; and in purſuance of all Vertue; with moſt intent Application of Mind, with expedite Promptitude, with accurate Circumſpection; *giving all diligence* (as St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) in *adding* one Vertue to another; *being ready* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *to every good work*; and *ſeeing that we walk circumſpectly*, or behave our ſelves exactly according to the Rules of Duty in all our Converſation.

2 Pet. 1. 5. Σπουδὴν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες. Tit. 3. 1. Βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς—Eph. 5. 15.

Col. 4. 2. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12. 1 Theſſ. 5. 17. Luke 18. 1. 1 Theſſ. 5. 18. Eph. 5. 20. Col. 3. 17. Heb. 13. 15. This Service requireth of us aſſiduous Attendance on Works of Piety and Devotion; that we do *inceſſantly watch to Prayers*, that we *always give thanks*, that we *continually do offer up the ſacrifice of praiſe to God.*

1 Theſſ. 1. 3. Κόπου ἀγάπης. Gal. 5. 13. Δουλεύοντες. Gal. 6. 10. Ἐργαζώμεθα. 1 Theſſ. 5. 15. It demandeth from us a continual *labour of charity*; that we *ſerve one another in love*; that we ſhould as *we have opportunity*, *work good to all men*, that we ſhould *always purſue good toward one another, and toward all men.*

Rom. 12. 18. Εἰ δυνατόν. Heb. 12. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Eph. 4. 3. It obligeth us *with all our powers to purſue peace with all men* (which conſidering our natural Peeviſhneſs, Pride, and Perverſeneſs is often no eaſie Task) and that we do σπουδάζειν, *ſtudiouſly endeavour to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace.*

Jam. 1. 4. It chargeth on us contentedly and patiently to undergo whatever God doth impoſe of Burthen or Sufferance, ſo that *patience hath its perfect work*; and it is a crabbed work to bend our ſtiff Inclinations, to quell our refractory Paſſions, to make our ſturdy Humour buckle thereto.

It doth exact that we ſhould govern and regulate according to very ſtrict and ſevere Laws all the Faculties of our Soul, all the Members of our Body, all internal Motion, and all external Actions proceeding from us; that we ſhould check our Inclinations, curb our Appetites, and compoſe our Paſſions; that we ſhould guard our Hearts from vain Thoughts and bad Deſires; that we ſhould bridle our Tongues from evil and from idle Diſcourſes; that we ſhould order our Steps in the ſtreight way of Righteouſneſs, not deflecting to the Right Hand or to the Left.

In the Diſcharge of this Service how many rough Difficulties are there to be ſurmounted, how many great Obſtacles to be removed, how many ſtout Oppoſitions to be encountered, how many potent Enemies to be vanquiſhed, how many ſore Hardſhips, Croſſes and Tribulations to be endured?

How

How shrewd a Task must we find it to circumcise our Hearts, to mortifie our Earthly Members, to crucifie our Flesh with its Affections and Lusts, to pull out our right Eyes, and cut off our Right Hands, to renounce our worldly Interests, to hate our neerest Relations, to take up and bear our Cross whenever Conscience and duty shall call us thereto?

Our Calling therefore doth require great Industry; and the Business of it consequently is well represented by those Performances, which demand the greatest Intention, and laborious Activity; it is stiled *Exercise* (agonistick and ascetick Exercise; γύμναζε σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν, *Exercise thy self to godliness*; and ἐν τούτῳ ἀυτὸς ἀσκῶ, *Herein I exercise my self to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men*;) *wrestling* (ἡμῶν ἡ πάλη, *our wrestling is not* (only) *against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers*;) *running a race* (*Let us run with patience the race that is set before us; So run that ye may obtain: I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling.*) *A warfare, a combating* (*War a good warfare, holding faith and a good Conscience; fight the good fight; thou therefore endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ: Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things*;) offering *violence*; (*The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*) *watching* (*Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober: Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong: watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*)

Γύμναζε σεαυτόν. 1 Tim. 4. 7.
Ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ. Acts 24. 16. Heb. 12. 11.
Eph. 6. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Heb. 12. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 18. 6. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Matth. 11. 12. 1 Thess. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 16. 13. Mat. 26. 41. 24. 42. Luke 12. 37. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Apoc. 3. 2. 16. 15.

Hence the Precepts importing the general Tenour of Christian Practice are usually couched in terms implying great Sedulity and Contention of Soul; Ἀγωνίζεσθε, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate: Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest; Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure; Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end: Wherefore, brethren, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*

Luke 12. Σπουδάζομεν. Heb. 4. 11. Ἐργάζεσθε. John 6. 27. Σπουδάζατε. 2 Per. 1. 10. 1 Per. 1. 13. Luke 12. 35. Eph. 6. 14. 2 Pet. 3. 14.

Such is the Work of our general Calling, and so much Industry it challengeth from us; with great Reason indeed, for that such Work is needful to our Happiness, and that our Labour will certainly be rewarded therewith.

The Work indeed of it self is most worthy to employ us; doth most become us, doth much adorn us, doth best befit our Divine Extraction and large Capacity; is the noblest, the handsomest, the sweetest Employment that could take us up; but we have also the greatest Inducements and Encouragements possible for our Industry therein.

John 4. 36.

There are by the Divine Bounty and Mercy, Wages assigned abundantly correspondent to our Work, yea, infinitely surpassing it: there is πολὺς μισθὸς *a great* (or a manifold) *hire* for our slender and simple Performances; there are several noble Prizes highly worth our striving for with our utmost Strength and Contention of Soul.

Mat. 5. 12.

In recompence thereof we shall assuredly gain even here in this transitory State the special Favour and Love of God, with his constant Protection and Care for our Good; his faithful Direction, and friendly Assistance to guide us, and uphold us in all our Ways, to bless and prosper our Undertakings, to supply us in our Needs, and comfort us in our Distresses; so that we shall, *lack nothing* that is good, that no *evil shall happen to us*, that *all things* shall concur and *co-operate for our benefit*.

Rom. 14. 18. *He that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.*

Ps. 34. 9. 84. 11. 33. 19. 37. 3, 19. Psal. 91. 10. —— Prov. 12. 21. Rom. 8. 38.

We

We ſhall thereby taſte the Satisfactions of a calm Mind, and a ſound Conſcience, quickned by the Conſolations of the Divine Spirit; *the peace of God ruling in our hearts, which paſſeth all underſtanding.*

Col. 3. 15. Phil. 4. 7.

We ſhall afterward, when this Moment is paſſed over, and our ſhort Days Work diſpatched, received from God's bountiful Hand an unconceivable Affluence of good things, an eternal Permanence of Life; undiſturbed Reſt, *indefectible Wealth*, ineffable Joy, incorruptible Glory, *a Kingdom unſhakable.*

Jam. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 4. 1 Cor. 9. 25.

He (ſaith our *Lord*) *that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlaſting.*

John 4. 36.

To them (ſaith St. *Paul*) *who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, God in recompence will beſtow eternal life.* And,

Αποδώσει — Rom. 2. 6.

I have (ſaith that bleſſed Labourer of himſelf) *fought the good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs.*

2 Tim. 4. 8.

What more effectual Spur or Incentive can there be to Induſtry in this Buſineſs, than to conſider that which St. *Paul* ſo often doth inculcate; *Knowing that whatſoever good thing any man doeth, the ſame* (a Recompence for the ſame) *he ſhall receive of the Lord*; and *knowing that* (in conſideration of our Service done to the Lord) *of the Lord we ſhall receive the reward of the inheritance?*

2 Cor. 5. 10. Col. 3. 24.

What Exhortation can be more firmly grounded, or ſtrongly backed, than is that of the Apoſtle, *Therefore my brethren be ye ſteadfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

1 Cor. 15. 58.

May it not alſo much encourage us to Induſtry to be aſſured, that not only the kind of our work, but the Degree of our Labour ſhall be conſidered and requited, in juſt Proportion; ſo that the harder we work, the higher we ſhall be rewarded; for, *to each one* (ſaith our *Lord*) *the ſon of man ſhall render a reward* κατὰ τὸν πεῖραξιν αὐτοῦ, *according to his performance*; *Every one* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ſhall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον, *his proper reward according to his proper work*; whence we have reaſon to obſerve St. *John*'s Advice, *Look to your ſelves, that ye loſe not thoſe things which ye have gained, but that ye receive a full reward.*

Ἀποδώσει ἑκάστῳ. Mat. 16. 27. 1 Cor. 3. 8. Rev. 22. 12. 2. 23. Mat. 25. 21. Luke 19. 12. Μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε. 2 Joh. 8.

To be negligent or ſlothful in ſuch a caſe, for want of a little Care and Pains to forfeit ſuch Advantages, what a Pity, what a Folly is it? Were an Opportunity preſented by a little minding our Buſineſs, and beſtirring our ſelves to procure a fair Eſtate, or a good Preferment, would not he be deemed mad or ſottiſh, who would ſit ſtill, and forego that his Advantage? how much more Wildneſs is it to be drowſie and ſluggiſh in this Caſe, thereby loſing eternal Bliſs and Glory? Well therefore might the *Apoſtle* ſay, *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?* How ſhall we eſcape not only the Sin, and guilt of baſeſt Ingratitude toward him that graciouſly doth offer it, but the Imputation of moſt wretched Folly, in being ſo much wanting to our own Intereſt and Welfare?

Heb. 2. 3.

Is it not a ſad thing, a woful Shame to obſerve what Pains Men will throw away upon things of ſmall or no Concernment to them? Yea, what Toil and Drudgery will they ſuſtain in the Service of *Satan*, in purſuit of Sin in the Gratification of their Vanities and Luſts.

What Pains will a covetous Wretch take in ſcraping for Pelf, how will he rack his Mind with carking Sollicitude to get, to keep, to ſpare it? how will he tire his Spirits with reſtleſs Travel? how will he pinch his Car-

caſe

case for want of what Nature craveth? what Infamy and Obloquy will he endure for his niggardly Parsimony and Sordidness?

How much Labour will an ambitious Fop undergo for Preferment, or vain Honour? to how many tedious Attendances, to how pitiful Servilities will he submit? what sore Crosses and Disappointments will he swallow? what Affronts and Indignities will he patiently digest, without desisting from his Enterprize?

How will a Man (as St. *Paul* observed) πάντα ἐγκρατεύεσθαι, endure all painful Abstinence and Continence in order to the obtaining a *corruptible Crown*, a fading Garland of Bays, a Puff of vain Applause? 1 Cor. 9. 25.

What Diligence will Men use to compass the Enjoyment of forbidden Pleasures; how watchful in catching Opportunities, how eager in quest of them will they be? what Difficulties will they undertake, what Hazards will they incur, what Damages and Inconveniences will they sustain, rather than fail of satisfying their Desires?

What Akings of Head and Heart; what Pangs of Mind, and Gripes of Conscience, what Anxieties of Regret and Fear, will every Worker of Iniquity undergo? So faithful Friends hath this vain and evil World; so diligent Servants hath the accursed Lord thereof; so careful and laborious will Men be to destroy and damn themselves: O that we could be willing Chry. ἀνδρ. θ to spend as much Care and Pains in the Service of our God: O that we were as true Friends of our selves: O that we could be as industrious for our Salvation; that is, in the Business of our General Calling; which having considered, let us proceed to the other Business belonging to us, which is,

II. The Business of our Particular Calling; that in reference whereto St. *Paul* doth prescribe, *Every man as the Lord hath called him, so let him walk. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*; let him so abide, as faithfully to prosecute the Work, and discharge the Duty of it; the doing which otherwhere he termeth πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια, *to do our own business* (*working with our hands*) and enjoineth it in Opposition to those two great Pests of Life, Sloth and pragmatical Curiosity; or the Neglect of our own, and medling with other Mens Affairs. 1 Cor. 7. 17. 1 Cor. 7. 20. 1 Thess. 4. 11. Eph. 4. 28.

This the *Apostle* nameth *our calling*, because we are called or appointed thereto by divine Providence; for he supposeth and taketh it for granted, that to each Man in this World God hath assigned a certain Station, unto which peculiar Action is suted; in which Station he biddeth him quietly to abide, till Providence fairly doth translate him, and during his Abode therein diligently to execute the Work thereof. 1 Cor. 7. 22.

Every Man is a Member of a double Body; of the Civil Commonwealth, and of the Christian Church: In relation to the latter, whereof St. *Paul* telleth us (and what he saith by Parity of Reason may be referred likewise to the former) that *God hath set the members every one in the body, as it pleaseth him*; and as it is in the Natural, so it is in every political and spiritual Body, every Member hath its proper Use and Function; *All members* (saith St. *Paul*) *have not* τὴν αὐτὴν πρᾶξιν *the same office*, or the same Work and Operation; yet every one hath some Work. There is no Member designed to be idle or useless, conferring no Benefit to the whole; but *the whole body* (saith the *Apostle*) *fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying it self in love*; each Member doth conspire and co-operate to the Strength, Nourishment, Thriving and Welfare of the whole. 1 Cor. 12. 8. Rom. 12. 4. Eph. 4. 16.

Ἕκαστος ὡς ἐμέρισεν ὁ Θεός. 1 Cor. 7. 17.

Every Man (who continueth a Man; in his Senses, or in any good Degree of natural Integrity) is by God endowed with competent Abilities to discharge some Function useful to common Good; or at least needful to his own Sustenance; to every one some Talent is committed, which in Subordination to God's Service he may improve, to the Benefit of the World, God's temporal, or of the Church, God's spiritual Kingdom.

It is plainly necessary, that the greatest Part of Men should have a determinate Work allotted to them, that they may support their Life and get their Food without being injurious, offensive, or burthensome to others; for their living they must either follow some Trade, or they must shark and filch, or they must beg, or they must starve.

And the rest are obliged to do somewhat, conducible to publick Good; that they may deserve to live; for a Drone should not be among the Bees; nor hath Right to devour the Honey: If any Man doth pretend, or presume that he hath nothing to do but to eat, to sleep, to play, to laugh; to enjoy his Ease, his Pleasure, his Humour, he thereby doth as it were disclaim a reasonable Title of living among Men, and sharing in the Fruits of their Industry; he in St. *Paul*'s Judgment should be debarred of Food, for *this* (saith the Holy *Apostle*) *we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat.* 2 Thess. 3. 10.

Such an one in the Body of Men what is he but an unnatural Excrescence, sucking Nutriment from it, without yielding Ornament or Use? what is he but a Wen deforming and encumbring the Body, or a Canker infesting and corrupting it.

As no Man (at least with Decency, Convenience and Comfort can live in the World, without being oblig'd to divers other Men for their Help in providing Accommodations for him, so Justice and Ingenuity (corroborated by divine Sanctions) do require of him, that in Commutation he, one way or other, should undertake some Pains redounding to the Benefit of others.

So hath the great Author of Order distributed the Ranks and Offices of Men in order to mutual Benefit and Comfort, that one Man should plow, another thresh, another grind, another labour at the Forge, another knit or weave; another sail, another trade, another supravise all these, labouring to keep them all in Order and Peace; that one should work with his Hands and Feet, another with his Head and Tongue; all conspiring to one common End, the Welfare of the whole, and the supply of what is useful to each particular Member; Every Man so reciprocally obliging and being obliged; the Prince being oblig'd to the Husbandman for his Bread, to the Weaver for his Cloaths, to the Mason for his Palace, to the Smith for his Sword; those being all oblig'd to him for his vigilant Care in protecting them; for their Security in pursuing the Work, and enjoying the Fruit of their Industry.

So every Man hath a Calling, and proper Business; whereto that Industry is required, I need not much to prove, the thing it self in Reason and Experience being so clearly evident; for what Business can be well dispatched, what Success can be expected to any Undertaking, in what Calling can any Man thrive without Industry? what Business is there that will go on of it self, or proceed to any good Issue if we do not carefully look to it, steadily hold it in its Course, constantly push and drive it forward? It is true as in Nature, so in all Affairs, *Nihil movet, non motum* nothing moveth without being moved.

Our

Our own Intereſt ſhould move us to be induſtrious in our Calling, that we may obtain the good Effects of being ſo in a comfortable and creditable Subſiſtence; that we may not ſuffer the Damages and Wants, the Diſappointments and Diſgraces enſuing on Sloth; but the chief Motive ſhould be from Piety and Conſcience; for that it is a Duty which we owe to God. For God having placed us in our Station; he having apportioned to us our Task, we being in Tranſaction of our Buſineſs his Servants, we do owe to him that neceſſary Property of good Servants, without which Fidelity cannot ſubſiſt; for how can he be looked on as a faithful Servant, who doth not effectually perform the Work charged on him? or diligently execute the Orders of his Maſter. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

St. *Paul* doth enjoin Servants that they ſhould *in all things obey their Maſters*, with conſcientious Regard to God, as therein performing Service to God, and expecting Recompence from him: And of Princes he ſaith, that they in Diſpenſation of Juſtice, enacting Laws, impoſing Taxes, and all political Adminiſtrations are *the miniſters of God*, προσκαρτεροῦντες, *attending conſtantly upon this very thing*: And if theſe Extremes, the higheſt and loweſt of all Vocations, are Services of God; if the higheſt upon that ſcore be tied to ſo much Diligence, then ſurely all middle Places upon the ſame Account of Conſcience toward God do exact no leſs. Col. 3. 22. Eph. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 7. 22, 23. Rom. 13. 6.

If he that hath one Talent, and he that hath ten muſt both improve them for God's Intereſt, then he that hath two, or three, or more, is obliged to the ſame Duty proportionably.

Every one ſhould conſider the World as the Family of that great *Paterfamilias (of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named)* and himſelf as an Officer or Servant therein, by God's Will and Deſignation conſtituted in that Employment, into which Providence hath caſt him; to confer in his Order and Way, ſomewhat toward a Proviſion for the maintenance of himſelf, and of his Fellow-Servants. Of a ſuperiour Officer our *Lord* ſaith, *Who is that faithful and wiſe ſervant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his houſhold, to give them their meat in due ſeaſon?* So the greateſt Men are as Stewards, Treaſurers, Comptrollers, or Purveyors; the reſt are inferiour Servants, in their proper Rank and Capacity. Eph. 3. 15. Matth. 24. 45. Luke 12. 42.

And he that with Diligence performeth his reſpective Duty (be it high and honourable, or mean and contemptible in outward Appearance) will pleaſe God, as keeping good Order, and as being uſeful to his Service; ſo that upon the Reckoning God will ſay to him, *Well done good and faithful ſervant, thou haſt been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* But he that doth otherwiſe, (behaving himſelf careleſly or ſluggiſhly in his Buſineſs) will offend God, as committing Diſorder, and as being unprofitable. 1 Cor. 14. 33. Mat. 25. 21.—

He committeth Diſorder, according to that of St. *Paul*; *We hear there are ſome, which walk among you diſorderly, not working at all.* His Sentence and Doom will be, according to our *Lord*, *O thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant*—*Caſt the unprofitable ſervant into utter darkneſs*; which Words are ſpoken in relation to one, who being a Flatterer, or Sluggard in his Calling, did not improve the ſpecial Talent entruſted with him for God's Service. 2 Theſſ. 3. 11. Mat. 25. 26. 30.

In fine, if we are conſcientiouſly induſtrious in our Vocation, we ſhall aſſuredly find the Bleſſing of God thereon; and that he thereby will convey good Succeſs, Comfort, competent Wealth, a fair Reputation, all deſirable Good unto us; for as all theſe things are promiſed to Induſtry, ſo the Promiſe eſpecially doth belong to that Induſtry, which a Man doth exerciſe in an orderly courſe of Action in his own Way; or rather in God's Way, wherein Divine Providence hath ſet him.

An irregular or impertinent Laborioufneſs, out of a Man's Calling or Sphere; a being diligent in other Mens Affairs, invading their Office (as if I a Prieſt will be trading, a Layman preaching) may not claim the Benefit of thoſe Promiſes, or the Bleſſings of Induſtry; But a Husbandman, who (with conſcientious Regard to God, and Confidence in him) is painful in tilling his Ground, may expect a good Crop, a Merchant who (upon the ſame Principle, with the like Diſpoſition) earneſtly followeth his Trade, may hope for ſafe Voyages and good Markets; A Prince carefully minding his Affairs may look for Peace and Proſperity to his Country; a Scholar ſtudying hard may be well aſſured of getting Knowledge, and finding Truth; all who with honeſt Diligence conſtantly do purſue their Buſineſs, may confidently and chearfully hope to reap the Advantages ſutable to it from the favourable Bleſſing of God. So that we have all Reaſon to obſerve the *Apoſtle*'s Precept, *not to be ſlothful in buſineſs.*

Prov. 21. 11. Prov. 10. 4. 13. 11.

I ſhould apply this Doctrine to our own Caſe, urging its Practice by Conſiderations peculiar to our Vocation; but having already paſſed the Bounds of time, I reſerve the doing it to another Opportunity.

Now the God of peace ſanctifie you wholly, and make you perfect in every good work to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight; through our Bleſſed Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*; to whom for ever be all Glory and Praiſe. *Amen.*

1 Theſſ. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20.

SERMON XXI.

Of Induſtry in our particular Calling, as *Gentlemen.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in Buſineſs.

I Have largely treated upon the Duty recommended in this Precept, and urged the Obſervance of it in general, at a Diſtance; I now intend more particularly and cloſely to apply it, in reference to thoſe Perſons, who ſeem more eſpecially obliged to it, and whoſe obſerving it may prove of greateſt Conſequence to publick Good; the which Application may alſo be moſt ſutable and profitable to this Audience; thoſe Perſons are of two ſorts; the one *Gentlemen*, the other *Scholars.*

I. The *Firſt* Place, as Civility demandeth, we aſſign to *Gentlemen*; or Perſons of eminent Rank in the World, well allied, graced with Honour, and furniſhed with Wealth; the which ſort of Perſons I conceive in a high Degree obliged to exerciſe Induſtry in Buſineſs. This

This at first hearing may seem a little Paradoxical and strange; for who have less Business than Gentlemen, who do need less Industry, than they? He that hath a fair Estate, and can live on his Means, what hath he to do, what Labour or Trouble can be exacted of him, what hath he to think on, or trouble his Head with, but how to invent Recreations and Pastimes to divert himself, and spend his waste Leisure pleasantly? Why should not he be allowed to enjoy himself, and the Benefits, which Nature or Fortune have freely dispensed to him, as he thinketh best, without Offence? Why may he not say with the rich Man in the *Gospel*, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry?* Is it not often said by the *Wise-man*, that there is *nothing better under the sun, than that a man should make his soul to enjoy good* in a chearful and comfortable Fruition of his Estate? According to the passable Notion and Definition, *What is a Gentleman but his Pleasure?* Luke 12. 19. Eccles. 2. 24. 3. 22. 5. 18. 8. 15.

If this be true, if a Gentleman be nothing else but this; then truly he is a sad Piece, the most inconsiderable, the most despicable, the most pitiful and wretched Creature in the World: If it is his Privilege to do nothing, it is his Privilege to be most unhappy; and to be so, will be his Fate, if he live according to it; for he that is of no Worth or Use, who produceth no beneficial Fruit, who performeth no Service to God, or to the World, what Title can he have to Happiness? what Capacity thereof? what Reward can he claim? what Comfort can he feel? to what Temptations is he exposed? what Guilts will he incur?

But in truth it is far otherwise; to suppose that a Gentleman is loose from Business, is a great Mistake; for indeed no Man hath more to do, no Man lieth under greater Engagements to Industry than he.

He is deeply obliged to be continually busie in more Ways than other Men, who have but one simple Calling or Occupation allotted to them; and that upon a tripple Account; in respect to God, to the World, and to himself.

1. He is first obliged to continual Employment in respect to God.

He out of a grateful regard to Divine Bounty for the Eminency of his Station, adorned with Dignity and Repute, for the plentiful Accommodations and Comforts of his Life, for his Exemption from those pinching Wants, those meaner Cares, those sordid Entertainments, and those toilsome Drudgeries, to which other Men are subject, is bound to be more diligent in God's Service, employing all the Advantages of his State to the Glory of his munificent Benefactour, to whose good Providence alone he doth owe them; for *who maketh him to differ* from another? and *what hath he that he did not receive* from God's free Bounty? 1 Cor. 4. 7.

In proportion to the Bulk of his Fortune his Heart should be enlarged with a thankful Sense of God's Goodness to him; his Mouth should ever be filled with Acknowledgment and Praise, he should always be ready to express his grateful Resentment of so great and peculiar Obligations.

He should dedicate larger Portions of that free Leisure which God hath granted to him, in waiting upon God, and constant Performances of Devotion.

He in frequently reflecting on the particular ample Favours of God, to him should imitate the Holy *Psalmist*, that illustrious Pattern of great and fortunate Men; saying after him, with his Spirit and Disposition of Soul; *Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side, therefore will I praise thee and thy faithfulness, O God.* Psal. 71. 21.

Lord,

Psal. 30. 7.— Psal. 31. 8. Psal. 23. 5. Psal. 30. 12. Psal. 16. 5. *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: Thou hast set my feet in a large room: Thou preparest a table before me;—thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over;——to the end that my glory may sing praise unto thee, and not be silent: The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage*; therefore *I will bless the Lord.*

In conceiving such Meditations his Head and his Heart should constantly be employed; as also in contriving ways of declaring and discharging real Gratitude; asking himself, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits?* What shall I render to him, not only as a Man for all the Gifts of Nature, as a Christian for all the Blessings of Grace, but as a Gentleman also, for the many Advantages of this my Condition, beyond so many of my Brethren, by special Providence indulged to me?

Psal. 116. 12.

He hath all the common Duties of Piety, of Charity, of Sobriety to discharge with Fidelity; for being a Gentleman doth not exempt him from being a Christian, but rather more strictly doth engage him to be such in a higher Degree than others; It is an Obligation peculiarly incumbent on him, in return for God's peculiar Favours, to pay God all due Obedience, and to exercise himself in all good Works; Disobedience being a more heinous Crime in him than in others, who have not such Encouragements to serve God.

His Obedience may be inculcated by those Arguments which *Joshua* and *Samuel* did use in pressing it on the *Israelites*; *Only* (said *Samuel*) *fear the Lord and serve him in truth, for consider how great things God hath done for you*; and, *I have given you* (saith God by *Joshua*) *a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not; and ye dwell in them; Of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat; Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth.*

1 Sam. 12. 24. Josh. 24. 13.

His Disobedience may be aggravated, as *Nehemiah* did that of the *Israelites*, *They took strong cities and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance; so they did eat and were filled, and became fat; and delighted themselves in thy great goodness; nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs —— they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness, which thou gavest them; neither turned they from their wicked works.*

Nehem. 9. 25—— Isa. 63. 9. Psal. 105. 6. Jer. 2. 7. Ezek. 16. 7.— 1 Sam. 15. 17. 2 Sam. 12. 7. 1 Kings 16.— 26, 35.

A Gentleman hath more Talents committed to him, and consequently more Employment required of him; If a rustick Labourer, or a Mechanick Artisan hath one Talent, a Gentleman hath ten; He hath innate Vigour of Spirit, and Height of Courage fortified by Use, he hath Accomplishment and Refinement of Parts by liberal Education, he hath the Succours of Parentage, Alliance and Friendship; he hath Wealth, he hath Honour, he hath Power and Authority, he hath Command of time and Leisure; he hath so many precious and useful Talents entrusted to him, not to be *wrapped up in a napkin*, or *hidden under-ground*; not to be squandred away in private Satisfactions; but *for negotiation*, to be put out to use, to be improved in the most advantageous way to God's Service: Every Talent doth require a particular Care and Pains to manage it well.

Luke 19. 20. Mat. 25. 25. Πεφυραμένα. Luke 19. 13. Ἐργάζεσθε. Mat. 25. 16. Mat. 25. 27. Mat. 25. 14. Παρέδωκε τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτῶ.——

He particularly is God's Steward, entrusted with God's Substance, for the Sustenance and Supply of God's Family; to relieve his fellow-Servants in their Need, upon seasonable Occasions by Hospitality, Mercy and charitable Beneficence; according to that Intimation of our Lord, *Who is that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler of his household*

Luke 12. 42.

hold to give them their portion and meat in due season? And according to those Apostolical Precepts, *As every one hath received a gift* (or special Favour,) *even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*; and *Charge the rich in this world,* —— *that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* Χάρισμα. 1 Pet. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

And he that is oblig'd to purvey for so many, and so to abound in good Works, how can he want Business? how can he pretend to a *Writ of ease?*

Surely that Gentleman is very blind, and very barren of Invention, who is to seek for Work fit for him, or cannot easily discern many Employments belonging to him, of great Concern and Consequence.

It is easie to prompt and shew him many Businesses, indispensibly belonging to him, as such.

It is his Business to minister Relief to his poor Neighbours in their Wants and Distresses by his Wealth. It is his Business to direct and advise the Ignorant, to comfort the Afflicted, to reclaim the Wicked, and encourage the Good by his Wisdom. It is his Business to protect the Weak, to rescue the Oppressed, to ease those who groan under heavy Burthens, by his power; to be such a Gentleman and so employed as *Job* was; who *did not eat his morsel alone, so that the fatherless did not eat thereof*; who *did not with-hold the poor from their desire, or cause the eyes of the widow to fail*; who *did not see any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering*; who *delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.* Job 31. 17, 16. 19. Job 29. 12.

It is his Business to be hospitable; kind and helpful to Strangers; following those noble Gentlemen, *Abraham* and *Lot*, who were so ready to invite and entertain Strangers with bountiful Courtesie. 1 Pet. 4. 9. Heb. 13. 2. Rom. 12. 13. Gen. 18. 1.

It is his Business to maintain Peace, and appease Dissentions among his Neighbours, interposing his Counsel and Authority in order thereto; whereto he hath that brave Gentleman *Moses* recommended for his Pattern. 19. 1. Exod. 2. 13. Acts 7. 26.

It is his Business to promote the Welfare and prosperity of his Countrey with his best Endeavours, and by all his Interest; in which practice the Sacred History doth propound divers gallant Gentlemen (*Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Nehemiah, Daniel, Mordecai*, and all such renowned Patriots) to guide him. Jud. 5. 9.

It is his Business to govern his Family well; to educate his Children in Piety and Vertue; to keep his Servants in good order. Josh. 24. 15. Psal. 101——

It is his Business to look to his Estate, and to keep it from wasting; that he may sustain the Repute of his Person and Quality with Decency; that he may be furnished with Ability to do good, may provide well for his Family, may be hospitable, may have wherewith to help his Brethren; for if, according to St. *Paul*'s Injunction, a Man should *work with his own hands, that he may have somewhat to impart to him that needeth*; then must he that hath an Estate, be careful to preserve it, for the same good Purpose. Μεταδιδόναι. Eph. 4. 28.

It is his Business to cultivate his Mind with Knowledge, with generous Dispositions, with all worthy Accomplishments befitting his Condition, and qualifying him for Honourable Action; so that he may excel, and raise himself above the vulgar Level no less in real inward Worth, than in exteriour Garb; that he be not a Gentleman merely in Name or Shew.

It

Ardua nam res est opibus non tradere mores.

It is Business (and that no slight or easie Business) to eschew the Vices, to check the Passions, to withstand the Temptations, to which his Condition is liable; taking heed that his Wealth, Honour and Power do not betray him into Pride, Insolence or Contempt of his poorer Brethren; unto Injustice or Oppression; unto Luxury and riotous Excess; unto Sloth, Stupidity, Forgetfulness of God, and irreligious Prophaneness.

It is a Business especially incumbent on him to be careful of his Ways, that they may have good Influence on others, who are apt to look upon him as their Guide and Pattern.

He should labour and study to be a Leader unto Vertue, and a Notable Promoter thereof; directing and exciting Men thereto by his exemplary Conversation; encouraging them by his Countenance and Authority; rewarding the Goodness of meaner People by his Bounty and Favour: He should be such a Gentleman as *Noah*, who *preached righteousness* by his Words and Works before a prophane World.

Such particular Affairs hath every Person of Quality, Credit, Wealth and Interest, allotted to him by God, and laid on him as Duties; the which to discharge faithfully, will enough employ a Man, and doth require Industry, much Care, much Pains; excluding Sloth and Negligence: So that it is impossible for a Sluggard to be a worthy Gentleman, vertuously disposed, a charitable Neighbour, a good Patriot, a good Husband of his Estate; any thing of that, to which God, by setting him in such a Station, doth call him.

Thus is a Gentleman obliged to Industry in respect of God, who justly doth exact those Labours of Piety, Charity, and all Vertue from him. Farther,

2. He hath also Obligations to Mankind, demanding Industry from him, upon Accounts of common Humanity, Equity and Ingenuity; For,

How can he fairly subsist upon the common Industry of Mankind without bearing a share thereof? how can he well satisfie himself to dwell statelily, to feed daintily, to be finely clad, to maintain a pompous Retinue merely upon the Sweat and Toil of others, without himself rendring a Compensation, or making some competent Returns of Care and Pain, redounding to the good of his Neighbour?

How can he justly claim, or reasonably expect from the World the Respect agreeable to his Rank, if he doth not by worthy Performances conduce to the Benefit of it? Can Men be obliged to regard those, from whom they receive no good?

If no Gentleman be tied to serve the Publick, or to yield Help in sustaining the common Burthens, and supplying the Needs of Mankind, then is the whole Order merely a Burthen, and an Offence to the World; a Race of Drones, a Pack of Cyphers in the Common-wealth, standing for nothing, deserving no Consideration or Regard: And if any are bound, then all are; for why should the whole Burthen lie on some, while others are exempted?

It is indeed supposed, that all are bound thereto, seeing that all have Recompences publickly allowed to them upon such Considerations; divers Respects and Privileges peculiar to the Order, grounded upon this Supposition, that they deserve such Advantages by conferring notable Benefit to the Publick; the which indeed it were an Arrogance to seek, and an Iniquity to accept for doing nothing.

It is an unsufferable Pride for any Man to pretend or conceit himself to differ so much from his Brethren, that he may be allowed to live in ease and Sloth, while the rest of Mankind are subject to continual Toil and Trouble. Moreover,

3. A Gentleman is bound to be industrious for his own sake; it is a Duty which he oweth to himself, to his Honour, to his Interest, to his Welfare. He cannot without Industry continue like himself, or maintain the Honour and Repute becoming his Quality and State; or secure himself from Contempt and Disgrace; for to be honourable and slothful are things inconsistent; seeing Honour doth not grow, nor can subsist without undertaking worthy Designs, constantly pursuing them, and happily atchieving them; it is the Fruit and Reward of such Actions, which are not performed with Ease.

External Respect and a Semblance of Honour, for the sake of publick Order, may be due to an exteriour Rank or Title; but to pay this, is not to honour the Person, but his Title, because it is supposed, that Men of real worth and use do bear it; or, lest by refusing it to one, the whole Order may seem disrespected; but yet true Honour, or mental Esteem is not due upon such accounts; nor is it possible to render it unto any Person, who doth not by worthy Qualities and good Deeds appear to merit it.

Nor can a Gentleman without Industry uphold his real Interests against the Attempts of Envy, of Treachery, of Flattery, of Sychophantry, of Avarice, to which his Condition is obnoxious; to preserve his Wealth and Estate, which are the Supports of his Quality, he must endure Care and Pains; otherwise he will by greedy Harpies, and crafty Lurchers be rifled or cozened of his Substance; it will of it self go to wreck, and be imbezill'd by Negligence.

He cannot without Industry guard his personal Welfare from manifold Inconveniences, Molestations and Mischiefs; Idleness it self will be very troublesome and irksome to him. His time will lie upon his Hands, as a pestring Incumbrance. His Mind will be infested with various Distractions and Distempers; vain and sad Thoughts, foul Lusts, and unquiet Passions will spring up therein, as Weeds in a neglected Soil. His Body will languish and become destitute of Health, of Vigour, of Activity, for want of due Exercise. All the Mischiefs which naturally do spring from Sloth and Stupidity will seize upon him.

4. Thus upon various accounts a Gentleman is engag'd to Business, and concern'd to exercise Industry therein; we may add, that indeed the very nature of Gentility, or the true notion of a Gentleman doth imply so much. For what, I pray, is a Gentleman, what Properties hath he, what Qualities are characteristical or peculiar to him, whereby he is distinguished from others, and raised above the Vulgar? Are they not especially two, *Courage* and *Courtesie*? which he that wanteth is not otherwise than equivocally a Gentleman, as an Image or a Carcass is a Man; without which Gentility in a conspicuous degree is no more than a vain Show, or an empty Name; and these plainly do involve Industry, do exclude Slothfulness; for *Courage* doth prompt boldly to undertake, and resolutely to dispatch great Enterprizes and Imployments of Difficulty; It is not seen in a flaunting Garb, or strutting Deportment; not in hectorly, ruffian-like swaggering or huffing; not in high Looks or big Words; but in stout and gallant Deeds, employing Vigour of Mind and Heart to atchieve them; how can a Man otherwise approve himself for couragious, than by signalizing himself in such a way?

And for *Courtesie*, how otherwise can it be well displayed, than in sedulous Activity for the good of Men; It surely doth not consist in modish Forms of Address, or complemental expressions, or hollow Professions, commonly void of meaning, or of sincerity;) but in real Performances of Beneficence, when Occasion doth invite, and in waiting for Opportunities to do good; the which Practice is accompanied with some Care and Pain,

adding a Price to it; for an eaſie Courteſie is therefore ſmall, becauſe eaſie, and may be deemed to proceed rather from ordinary Humanity, than from gentile Diſpoſition; ſo that in fine, he alone doth appear truly a Gentleman, who hath the Heart to undergo hard Tasks for publick Good, and willingly taketh Pains to oblige his Neighbours and Friends.

5. The Work indeed of Gentlemen is not ſo groſs, but it may be as ſmart and painful as any other. For all hard Work is not manual; there are other Inſtruments of Action beſide the Plow, the Spade, the Hammer, the Shuttle; nor doth every Work produce Sweat, and viſible tiring of Body; the Head may work hard in contrivance of good Deſigns, the Tongue may be very active in diſpenſing Advice, Perſwaſion, Comfort, and Edification in Vertue: A Man may beſtir himſelf in *going about to do good*; theſe are Works imploying the cleanly Induſtry of a Gentleman.

6. In ſuch Works it was, that the trueſt and greateſt Pattern of Gentility that ever was, did employ himſelf: Who was that? Even our Lord himſelf; for he had no particular Trade or Profeſſion: No Man can be more looſe from any Engagement to the World than he was; no Man had leſs need of Buſineſs or Pains-taking than he; for he had a vaſt Eſtate, being *heir of all things*, all the World being at his Diſpoſal, yea, infinitely more, it being in his power with a Word to create whatever he would to ſerve his need, or ſatisfie his Pleaſure; Omnipotency being his Treaſure and Supply; he had a Retinue of Angels to wait on him, and miniſter to him; whatever Sufficiency any Man can fanſie to himſelf to diſpenſe with his taking pains, that had he in a far higher degree: Yet did he find Work for himſelf, and continually was employed in performing Service to God, and imparting Benefits to Men; nor was ever Induſtry exerciſed upon Earth comparable to his.

Iſa. 53. 11.

Gentlemen therefore would do well to make him the Pattern of their Life, to whoſe Induſtry they muſt be beholden for their Salvation: In order whereto we recommend them to his Grace.

SERMON XXII.

Of Induſtry in our particular Calling, as *Scholars.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not ſlothful in Buſineſs.

I Proceed to the other ſort of Perſons, whom we did propound, Namely,

II. *Scholars*, and that on them particularly great Engagements do lie to be induſtrious, is moſt evident from various Conſiderations.

The

The Nature and Design of this Calling doth suppose Industry; the matter and Extent of it doth require Industry; the Worth of it doth highly deserve Industry. We are in special Gratitude to God, in Charity to Men, in due regard to our selves bound unto it.

1. First, I say, the Nature and Design of our Calling doth suppose Industry: *There is* (saith the divine *Preacher*) *a man whose labour is in wisdom, in knowledge, and in equity*; Such Men are Scholars; so that we are indeed no Scholars, but absurd Usurpers of the Name, if we are not laborious; for what is a Scholar, but one who retireth his Person, and avocateth his Mind from other Occupations, and worldly Entertainments, that he may σχολάζειν, *vacare studiis*, employ his Mind and Leisure on Study and Learning, in the Search of Truth, the Quest of Knowledge, the Improvement of his Reason. Wherefore an idle Scholar, a lazy Student, a sluggish Man of Learning, is Nonsence. Eccles. 2. 21. Ἡ σοφία γραμματέως ἐν εὐκαιρίᾳ σχολῆς. Eccl. 38. 24.

What is Learning but a diligent attendance to Instruction of Masters, skilled in any Knowledge, and conveying their Notions to us in Word or Writing?

What is Study, but an earnest, steady, persevering Application of Mind to some Matter, on which we fix our Thoughts, with intent to see through it? What in *Solomon*'s Language are these *Scholastick* Occupations, but *inclining the ear* and *applying our heart to understanding*; than which commonly there is nothing more laborious, more straining Nature, and more tiring our Spirits; whence it is well compared to the most painful Exercises of Body and Soul. Prov. 2. 2.

The *Wise-man* advising Men to seek Wisdom, the which is the proper Design of our Calling, doth intimate that Work to be like digging in the Mines for Silver, and like searching all about for concealed Treasure; than which there can hardly be any more difficult and painful Task, *If* (saith he) *thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand.* Prov. 2. 4. ——Otherwhere he compareth the same Work to assiduous watching and waiting, like that of a Guard or a Client, which are the greatest Instances of Diligence; *Blessed* (saith he; or Wisdom by him saith blessed) *is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.* Prov. 8. 34.

Wherefore if we will approve our selves to be what we are called, and what we pretend to be, if we will avoid being Impostors, assuming a Name not due to us, we must not be slothful. Farther,

2. The Matter and Extent of our Business doth require Industry from us: The Matter of it, which is Truth and Knowledge; the Extent which is very large and comprehensive, taking in all Truth, all Knowledge, worthy our Study, and useful for the Designs of it.

Our Business is to find Truth; the which even in Matters of high Importance) is not easily to be discovered; being as a Vein of Silver, encompassed with Earth and mixed with Dross) deeply laid in the Obscurity of things, wrapt up in false Appearances, entangled with Objections, and perplexed with Debates; being therefore not readily discoverable; especially by Minds clouded with Prejudices, Lusts, Passions, partial Affections, Appetites of Honour and Interest; whence to descry it requireth the most curious Observation and solicitous Circumspection that can be; together with great Pains in the Preparation and Purgation of our Minds toward the Enquiry of it.

Our Business is to attain Knowledge, not concerning obvious and vulgar Matters, but about sublime, abstruse, intricate and knotty Subjects, remote from common Observation and Sense; to get sure and exact Notions

about which will try the beſt Forces of our Mind with their utmoſt Endeavours; in firmly ſetling Principles, in ſtrictly deducing Conſequences, in orderly digeſting Concluſions, in faithfully retaining what we learn by our Contemplation and Study.

And if to get a competent Knowledge about a few things, or to be reaſonably skilful in any ſort of Learning, be difficult, how much Induſtry doth it require to be well ſeen in many, or to have waded through the vaſt compaſs of Learning, in no part whereof a Scholar may conveniently or handſomely be ignorant; ſeeing there is ſuch a Connexion of things, and Dependance of Notions, that one part of Learning doth confer Light to another, that a Man can hardly well underſtand any thing without knowing divers other things; that he will be a lame Scholar, who hath not an Inſight into many kinds of Knowledge, that he can hardly be a good Scholar who is not a general one.

To underſtand ſo many Languages (which are the Shells of Knowledge) to comprehend ſo many Sciences (full of various Theorems and Problems) to peruſe ſo many Hiſtories (of ancient and modern times;) to know the World, both natural and humane; to be acquainted with the various Inventions, Inquiries, Opinions and Controverſies of learned Men; to skill the Arts of expreſſing our Mind, and imparting our Conceptions with Advantage, ſo as to inſtruct or perſwade others; theſe are Works indeed, which will exerciſe and ſtrain our Faculties (our Reaſon, our Fancy, our Memory) in painful Study.

The Knowledge of ſuch things is not innate to us; it doth not of it ſelf ſpring up in our Minds; it is not any ways incident by chance, or infus'd by Grace (except rarely by Miracle;) common Obſervation doth not produce it; it cannot be purchaſed at any rate, except by that, for which it was ſaid of old, *the gods ſell all things*, that is for Pains; without which the beſt Wit and greateſt Capacity may not render a Man learned, as the beſt Soil will not yield good Fruit or Grain, if they be not planted or ſown therein.

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.

Conſider, if you pleaſe, what a Scholar *Solomon* was; beſide his Skill in *Politicks*, which was his principal Faculty and Profeſſion, whereby he did with admirable Dexterity and Prudence manage the Affairs of that great Kingdom, *judging his people, and diſcerning what was good, and bad*; accurately diſpenſing Juſtice; ſetling his Country in a moſt flouriſhing ſtate of Peace, Order, Plenty and Wealth; largely extending his Territory; ſo that his Wiſdom of this kind was famous over the Earth; Beſide, I ſay, this civil Wiſdom, he had an exquiſite Skill in Natural *Philoſophy* and *Medicine*; For *He ſpake of Trees* (or Plants) *from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall: He ſpake alſo of beaſts and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes.*

1 Kings 3. 9.
1 Kings 4. 20. 25. 10. 27.
1 Kings 4. 21.
1 Kings 10. 6, 24.

He was well verſed in the *Mathematicks*; for it is ſaid, *Solomon's wiſdom excelled the wiſdom of all the children of the Eaſt-Country, and all the wiſdom of Egypt*; the Wiſdom of which Nations did conſiſt in thoſe Sciences. And of his *Mechanick* Skill, he left for a Monument, the moſt glorious Structure that ever ſtood on Earth.

1 Kings 4. 33.
1 Kings 4. 30.

He was very skilful in Poetry and Muſick; for he did himſelf *compoſe above a thouſand ſongs*; whereof one yet extant declareth the Loftineſs of his Fancy, the Richneſs of his Vein, and the Elegancy of his Style.

1 Kings 4. 32.

He had great Ability in Rhetorick; according to that in *Wiſdom, God granted me to ſpeak as I would*; and that in *Eccleſiaſtes, The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words*; a great Inſtance of which Faculty, we have in that admirable Prayer of his Compoſure at the Dedication of the Temple.

Sap. 7. 15.
Eccleſ. 12. 10.
1 Kings 8.

He did wonderfully excel in *Ethicks*; concerning which he *ſpake three thou-*

1 Kings 4. 32.

thousand Proverbs or moral Aphorisms; and *Moreover* (saith *Ecclesiastes*) *because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs*; the which did contain a great Variety of notable Observations, and useful Directions for common Life, couched in pithy Expressions. Eccles. 12. 9.

As for *Theology*, as the Study of that was the chief Study to which he exhorteth others (as to the *head*, or principal part *of wisdom*) so questionless he was himself most conversant therein; for proof whereof he did leave so many excellent Theorems and Precepts of Divinity to us. Prov. 2. 5, —

In fine, there is no sort of Knowledge, to which he did not apply his Study; witness himself in those Words, *I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that are done under heaven.* Eccles. 1. 13.

Such a Scholar was he; and such if we have a noble Ambition to be, we must use the course he did; which was first in his Heart to prefer Wisdom before all worldly things; then to pray to God for it, or for his Blessing in our quest of it; then to use the means of attaining it, diligent Searching and hard Study; for that this was his method he telleth us, *I* (saith he) *applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things.* Eccles. 7. 25.

Such Considerations shew the Necessity of Industry for a Scholar; but,

3. The Worth, and Excellency, and great Utility, together with the Pleasantness of his Vocation, deserving the highest Industry, do superadd much Obligation thereto.

We are much bound to be diligent out of Ingenuity, and in Gratitude to God, who by his gracious Providence hath assigned to us a Calling so worthy, an Employment so comfortable, a way of Life no less commodious, beneficial and delightful to our selves, than serviceable to God, and useful for the World.

If we had our Option and Choice, what Calling would we desire before this of any whereto Men are affixed? How could we better imploy our Mind, or place our Labour, or spend our time, or pass our Pilgrimage in this World, than in scholastical Occupations?

It were hard to reckon up, or to express the numberless great Advantages of this Calling, I shall therefore only touch some, which readily fall under my Thought recommending its Value to us.

It is a Calling, the Design whereof conspireth with the general End of our Being; the Perfection of our Nature in its Endowments, and the Fruition of it in its best Operations.

It is a Calling that doth not employ us in bodily Toil, in worldly Care, in pursuit of trivial Affairs, in sordid Drudgeries; but in those Angelical Operations of Soul, the Contemplation of Truth, and Attainment of VVisdom; which are the worthiest Exercises of our Reason, and sweetest Entertainments of our Mind; the most precious Wealth, and most beautiful Ornaments of our Soul; whereby our Faculties are improved, are polished and refined, are enlarged in their Power and Use by habitual Accessions: the which are conducible to our own greatest Profit and Benefit, as serving to rectifie our Wills, to compose our Affections, to guide our Lives in the ways of Vertue, to bring us unto Felicity. Prov. 2. 4, 10.

It is a Calling, which being duly follow'd, will most sever us from the vulgar sort of Men, and advance us above the common Pitch; enduing us with Light to see farther than other Men, disposing us to affect better things, and to slight those meaner Objects of Humane Desire, on which Men commonly dote; freeing us from the erroneous Conceits, and from the Perverse Affections of common People. It is said διπλῆν ὁρῶσιν οἱ μαθόντες γράμματα, *men of learning are double-sighted*; but it is true, that in many cases

ſes they ſee infinitely farther than a vulgar Sight doth reach; and if a Man by ſerious Study doth acquire a clear and ſolid Judgment of things, ſo as to aſſign to each its due Weight and Price; if he accordingly be inclined in his Heart to affect and purſue them; if from clear and right Notions of things a meek and ingenuous Temper of Mind, a Command and Moderation of Paſſions, a firm Integrity, and a cordial Love of Goodneſs do ſpring, he thereby becometh another kind of thing, much different from thoſe brutiſh Men (Beaſts of the People) who blindly follow the Motions of their ſenſual Appetite, or the Suggeſtions of their Fancy, or their miſtaken Prejudices.

It is a Calling which hath theſe conſiderable Advantages, that by vertue of Improvement therein, we can ſee with our own Eyes, and guide our ſelves by our own Reaſons, not being led blindfold about, or depending precariouſly on the Conduct of others in Matters of higheſt Concern to us. That we are exempted from giddy Credulity, from wavering Levity, from fond Admiration of Perſons and Things, being able to diſtinguiſh of things, and to ſettle our Judgments about them, and to get an intimate Acquaintance with them, aſſuring to us their true Nature and Worth: that we are alſo thereby reſcu'd from admiring our ſelves, and that over-weening Self-conceitedneſs, of which the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *The ſluggard is wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon.*

Prov. 26. 16.

It is a Calling, whereby we are qualified and enabled to do God ſervice; to gratifie his Deſires, to promote his Honour, to advance his Intereſts; to render his Name glorious in the World; by teaching, maintaining and propagating his Truth; by perſwading Men to render their due Love, Reverence, and Obedience to him; than which we can have no more honourable or ſatisfactory Imployment; more like to that of the glorious and bleſſed Spirits.

It is a Calling, the due Proſecution whereof doth ingratiate us with God, and procureth his Favour; rendring us fit Objects of his Love, and entitling us thereto in regard to our Qualities, and Recompence of our Works: For *God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wiſdom*; and, *ſo ſhalt thou find favour and good underſtanding in the ſight of God and man.*

Sap. 7. 28. Pſal. 5. 5. Prov. 3. 4.

It is a Calling whereby with greateſt Advantage we may benefit Men, and deſerve well of the World; drawing Men to the Knowledge and Service of God, reclaiming them from Errour and Sin, reſcuing them from Miſery, and conducting them to Happineſs; by clear Inſtruction, by faithful Admonition, by powerful Exhortation: And what can be more noble, than to be the Lights of the World, the Guides of Practice to Men, the Authors of ſo much good, ſo egregious Benefactors to Mankind?

It is a Calling moſt exempt from the Cares, the Croſſes, the Turmoils, the factious Jarrs, the anxious Intrigues, the vexatious Moleſtations of the World; its Buſineſs lying out of the road of thoſe Miſchiefs, wholly lying in ſolitary Retirement, or being tranſacted in the moſt innocent and ingenuous Company.

It is a Calling leaſt ſubject to any Danger or Diſappointment; wherein we may well be aſſured not to miſcarry or loſe our Labour; for the Merchant indeed by manifold Accidents may loſe his Voyage, or find a bad Market; the Husbandman may plough and ſow in vain; but the Student hardly can fail of improving his Stock, and reaping a good Crop of Knowledge; eſpecially if he ſtudy with a conſcientious Mind, and pious Reverence to God, imploring his gracious Help and Bleſſing.

It is a Calling, the Induſtry us'd wherein doth abundantly recompence it ſelf, by the Pleaſure and Sweetneſs which it carrieth in it; ſo that the more Pains one taketh, the more Delight he findeth, feeling himſelf proportionably to grow in Knowledge; and that his Work becometh continually more eaſie to him.

It

It is a Calling, the Buſineſs whereof doth ſo exerciſe as not to weary, ſo entertain as not to cloy us; being not (as other Occupations are) a drawing in a Mill, or a nauſeous (tedious) Repetition of the ſame Work; but a continual Progreſs toward freſh Objects; our Mind not being ſtaked to one or a few poor Matters, but having immenſe Fields of Contemplation, wherein it may everlaſtingly expatiate, with great Proficiency and Pleaſure. Γηράσκω δ' ἀεὶ πολλὰ διδασκόμενος.

It is a Calling which doth ever afford plentiful Fruit, even in regard to the Conveniences of this preſent and temporal State; the which ſufficiently will requite the Pains expended thereon: For if we be honeſtly induſtrious we ſhall not want Succeſs; and ſucceeding we ſhall not want a Competence of Wealth, of Reputation, of Intereſt in the World: For concerning Wiſdom, which is the reſult of honeſt Study, the *Wiſe-man* telleth us, *Riches and honour are with her, yea, durable riches and righteouſneſs: length of days are in her right-hand, and in her left hand riches and honour: Exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee, ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour, when thou doſt embrace her; ſhe ſhall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee*; In common Experience the Wealth of the Mind doth qualifie for Imployments, which have good Recompences annexed to them; and neither God nor Man will ſuffer him long to want, who is endowed with worthy Accompliſhments of Knowledge: It was a ridiculous Providence in *Nero* that if he ſhould chance to loſe his Empire, he might live by fidling; yet his Motto was good; and *Dionyſius*, another Tyrant, found the Benefit of it; τὸ τεχνίον γαῖα τρέφει, he that hath any good Art, hath therein an Eſtate, and Land in every Place; he is ſecured againſt being reduc'd to Extremity of any Misfortune: *Wiſdom* (ſaith the *Wiſeman*) *is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wiſdom giveth life to them that have it*: Money is a Defence, of which Fortune may bereave us; but Wiſdom is beyond its Attacks; being a Treaſure ſeated in a Place inacceſſible to external Impreſſions. Prov. 8. 18. 3. 16. 4. 9, 10. Eccl. 7. 12.

And as a Learned Man cannot be deſtitute of Subſtance; ſo he cannot want Credit, having ſuch an Ornament, than which none hath a more general Eſtimation; and which can be of low rate only among that ſort of Folk, to whom *Solomon* ſaith, *How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity?* —— *and fools hate knowledge?* It is that which recommendeth a Man in all Company, and procureth Regard, every one yielding * Attention and Acceptance to inſtructive, neat, appoſite Diſcourſe) that which the Scripture calleth *acceptable, pleaſant gracious words*) Men think themſelves obliged thereby by receiving Information and Satisfaction from it; and accordingly *Every man* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *ſhall kiſs his lips, that giveth a right anſwer*; and —— *for the grace of his lips the King ſhall be his friend*; and, *the words of a wiſe-man's mouth are gracious*. It is that, an Eminency wherein purchaſeth laſting Fame, and a Life after Death, in the good Memory and Opinion of Poſterity; *Many ſhall commend his underſtanding, and ſo long as the world endureth, it ſhall not be blotted out, his memorial ſhall not depart away, and his name ſhall live from generation to generation.* A fame no leſs great, and far more innocent than Acts of Chivalry and Martial Proweſs; for is not *Ariſtotle* as renown'd for teaching the World with his Pen, as *Alexander* for conquering it with his Sword; is not one far oftener mentioned, than the other? do not Men hold themſelves much more oblig'd to the Learning of the Philoſopher, than to the Valour of the Warriour? Indeed the Fame of all others is indebted to the Pains of the Scholar, and could not ſubſiſt, but with and by his Fame, *Dignum laude virum, muſa vetat mori*; Learning conſecrateth it ſelf and its Subject together, to immortal Remembrance. Prov. 1. 22. 1. 7. * Prov. 22. 17. Prov. 24. 26. Prov. 22. 15, 26. Eccleſ. 10. 12. Eccluſ. 39. 9.

It

It is a Calling that fitteth a Man for all Conditions and Fortunes; so that he can enjoy Prosperity with Moderation, and sustain Adversity with Comfort: He that loveth a Book, will never want a faithful Friend, a wholsome Counsellour, a chearful Companion, an effectual Comforter. By Study, by reading, by thinking one may innocently divert, and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all Weathers, so in all Fortunes.

In fine, it is a Calling, which *Solomon*, who had curiously observed and exactly compared and scann'd, by Reason and by Experience all other Occupations and ways of Life, did prefer above all others; and we may presume would sooner have parted with his royal State, than with his Learning; for *Wisdom* (saith he) *is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding*; and *Then I saw* (then, that is, after a serious Disquisition and Discussion of things, I saw) *that wisdom exceedeth folly* (that is, Knowledge excelleth Ignorance) *as light excelleth darkness.*

Prov. 4. 7. Eccluſ. 2. 13.

These things and much more may be said of Learning in general; but if more distinctly we survey each Part, and each Object of it, we shall find, that each doth yield considerable Emoluments, and Delights; Benefit to our Soul, Advantage to our Life, Satisfaction to our Mind.

The Observation of things, and Collection of Experiments how doth it enrich the Mind with *Ideas*, and breed a kind of familiar Acquaintance with all things, so that nothing doth surprize us, or strike our Mind with Astonishment and Admiration? and if our *eye be not satisfied with seeing, nor our ear filled with hearing*, how much less is our Mind satiated with the Pleasures of speculating and observing that immense Variety of Objects subject to its View.

Eccleſ. 1. 8.

The Exercise of our Mind in rational Discursiveness, about things in quest of Truth; canvasing Questions, examining Arguments for and against; how greatly doth it better us, fortifying our Natural Parts, enabling us to fix our Thoughts on Objects without roving, enuring us to weigh and resolve, and judge well about Matters proposed; preserving us from being easily abused by captious Fallacies, gull'd by specious Pretences, tossed about with every Doubt or Objection started before us?

Invention of any kind (in discerning the Causes of abstruse Effects, in resolving hard Problems, in demonstrating Theorems, in framing Compositures of witty Description, or forcible Perswasion) how much doth it exceed the Pleasure of hunting for any Game, or of combating for any Victory? do any Man's Children so much please him, as these Creatures of his Brain?

The reading of Books what is it, but conversing with the wisest Men of all Ages and all Countries, who thereby communicate to us their most deliberate Thoughts, choicest Notions, and best Inventions, couched in good Expression, and digested in exact Method.

And as to the particular Matters or Objects of Study, all have their Use and Pleasure. I shall only touch them.

The very initial Studies of *Tongues* and *Grammatical* Literature are very profitable and necessary, as the Inlets to Knowledge, whereby we are enabled to understand wise Men speaking their Sense in their own Terms and lively Strain, whereby especially we are assisted to drink sacred Knowledge out of the Fountains, the Divine Oracles.

Luther would not part with a little *Hebrew* he had for all the *Turkish* Empire.

Rhetorick, or the part of conveying our Thoughts to others by Speech with Advantages of Clearness, Force and Elegancy, so as to instruct, to perswade, to delight the Auditors; of how great Benefit is it, if it be well used? how much may it conduce to the Service of God, and Edification of Men? What hath been a more effectual Instrument of doing good, and work-

working Wonders not only in the World, but in the Church? how many Souls have been converted from Error, Vanity and Vice, to Truth, Soberneſs and Vertue, by an eloquent *Apollos*, a *Baſil*, a *Chryſoſtom*? Ἀνὴρ λόγιος, καὶ δυνατὸς-- Acts 18. 24.

The Peruſal of *Hiſtory*, how pleaſant Illumination of Mind, how uſeful Direction of Life? how ſprightly Incentives to Vertue doth it afford? how doth it ſupply the room of Experience, and furniſh us with Prudence at the Expence of others, informing us about the ways of Action, and the Conſequences thereof by Examples, without our own Danger or Trouble? how may it inſtruct and encourage us in Piety, while therein we trace the Paths of God in Men, or obſerve the Methods of Divine Providence, how the Lord and Judge of the World in due ſeaſon protecteth, proſpereth, bleſſeth, rewardeth Innocence and Integrity? how he croſſeth, defeateth, blaſteth, curſeth, puniſheth Iniquity and Outrage; managing things with admirable Temper of Wiſdom to the good of Mankind, and Advancement of his own Glory?

The *Mathematical* Sciences, how pleaſant is the Speculation of them to the Mind? how uſeful is the Practice to common Life? how do they whet and excite the Mind? how do they inure it to ſtrict Reaſoning, and patient Meditation?

Natural Philoſophy, the Contemplation of this great Theatre, or viſible Syſtem preſented before us; obſerving the various Appearances therein, and inquiring into their Cauſes; reflecting on the Order, Connection and Harmony of things; conſidering their original Source, and their final Deſign: How doth it enlarge our Minds, and advance them above vulgar Amuſements, and the Admiration of thoſe petty things, about which Men cark and bicker? how may it ſerve to work in us pious Affections of Admiration, Reverence and Love toward our great Creator, whoſe *eternal divinity is clearly ſeen*, whoſe *glory is declared*, whoſe tranſcendent Perfections and Attributes of immenſe Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs are conſpicuouſly diſplayed, whoſe particular Kindneſs toward us Men doth evidently ſhine in thoſe his Works of Nature? Rom. 1. 20. Pſal. 19. 1. Pſal. 8.

The Study of *Moral Philoſophy*, how exceedingly beneficial may it be to us, ſuggeſting to us the Dictates of Reaſon concerning the Nature and Faculties of our Soul, the chief Good and End of our Life, the way and means of attaining Happineſs, the beſt Rules and Methods of Practice; the Diſtinctions between Good and Evil, the Nature of each Vertue, and Motives to embrace it; the Rank wherein we ſtand in the World, and the Duties proper to our Relations; by rightly underſtanding and eſtimating which things we may know how to behave our ſelves decently and ſoberly toward our ſelves, juſtly and prudently toward our Neighbours; we may learn to correct our Inclinations, to regulate our Appetites, to moderate our Paſſions, to govern our Actions, to conduct and weild all our Practice well in Proſecution of our End; ſo as to enjoy our Being and Conveniencies of Life in conſtant Quiet and Peace, with Tranquillity and Satisfaction of Mind?

But eſpecially the Study of *Theology* how numberleſs unexpreſſible Advantages doth it yield? For,

It enlighteneth our Minds with the beſt Knowledge concerning the moſt high and worthy Objects in order to the moſt happy End, with the firmeſt Aſſurance.

It certainly and perfectly doth inform us concerning the Nature and Attributes, the Will and Intentions, the Works and Providence of God.

It fully declareth to us our own Nature, our Original, our deſign'd End, our whole Duty, our certain Way of attaining eternal Life and Felicity.

It exactly teacheth us how we ſhould demean our ſelves in all reſpects, piouſly

piously toward God, justly and charitably toward our Neighbour, soberly toward our selves; without Blame in the World, with Satisfaction of our Conscience, with assured Hope of blessed Rewards.

It proposeth those Encouragements, and exhibiteth Assurances of those Helps, which serve potently to engage us in all good Practice.

It setteth before us a most compleat and lively Pattern of all Goodness; apt most clearly to direct, most strongly to excite, most obligingly to engage us thereto; especially instructing and inclining to the Practice of the most high and hard Duties, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Self-denial, Contempt of all worldly Vanities.

It discovereth those sublime Mysteries and stupendious Wonders of Grace, whereby God hath demonstrated an Incomprehensible Kindness to Mankind, and our Obligation to correspondent Gratitude.

1 Pet. 1. 12. Tit. 3. 4.

It representeth manifold Arguments and Incentives to love God with most intense Affection, to confide in him with most firm Assurance, to delight in him continually *with joy unspeakable*; which are the noblest, the sweetest, the happiest Operations of our Soul.

2 Cor. 4. 8.

It reareth our Hearts from vain Thoughts, and mean Desires concerning these poor, transitory, earthly things, to Contemplations, Affections, and Hopes toward Objects most excellent, eternal and celestial.

It engageth us to study the Book of God, the Book of Books, the richest Mine of most excellent Knowledge, containing infallible Oracles of Truth, and heavenly Rules of Life; *which are able to make us wise to salvation, and perfect to every good work.*

2 Tim. 3. 15. Psal. 19. 10.

And how can we otherwise be so well employ'd, as in Meditation about such things? What Occupation doth nearer approach to that of the blessed Angels? What Heaven is there upon Earth like to that of constantly feasting our Minds and Hearts in the Contemplation of such Objects? Especially considering that this Study doth not only yield private Benefit to our selves in forwarding our own Salvation, but enableth us by our Guidance and Encouragement to promote the eternal Welfare of others, and by our Endeavours to people Heaven, according to that Exhortation of St. *Paul* pressing on *Timothy* this Study with Diligence; *Meditate upon these things; give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all; take heed unto thy self, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.*

1 Tim. 4. 16.

So considerable is each part of Learning, so extreamly profitable are some parts of it; Indeed the Skill of any liberal Art is valuable, as a handsome Ornament, as a harmless Divertisement, as an useful Instrument upon Occasions; as preferable to all other Accomplishments and Advantages of Person or Fortune (Beauty, Strength, Wealth, Power or the like;) for who would not purchase any kind of such Knowledge at any rate; who would sell it for any Price; who would not chuse rather to be deformed or impotent in his Body, than to have a mis-shapen and weak Mind; to have rather a lank Purse than an empty Brain; to have no Title at all, than no worth to bear it out? if any would, he is not of *Solomon*'s Mind; for of Wisdom (by which he meaneth a Comprehension of all Knowledge, Divine and Humane; into which the Knowledge of Natural things, of Mathematicks, of Poetry, are reckoned Ingredients) he saith, *The merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; she is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her: Her fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and her revenue than choice silver.*

1 Kings 4 29——

Prov. 2. 14. 8. 11. Prov. 8. 19. 16. 16. 20. 15. 4. 7.

Now then, considering all these Advantages of our Calling, if we by our Negligence or Sluggishness therein do lose them, are we not very ingrate-

grateful to God, who gave them as with a gracious Intent for our Good, so with Expectation that we should improve them to his Service? If God had allotted to us the Calling of Rusticks, or of Artificers, we had been impious in not diligently following it; but we are abominably ingrateful in neglecting this most incomparably excellent Vocation.

Are we not extremely defective to our selves, if indulging a wretched Humour of Laziness we will not enjoy those sweet Pleasures, nor embrace those great Profits to which God in Mercy calleth us?

If *Solomon* said true, *He that getteth wisdom, loveth his own soul, he that keepeth understanding shall find good*; how little Friends are we to our selves, how neglectful of our own Welfare, by not using the means of getting Wisdom? Prov. 19. 8.

The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge saith *Solomon*; what a Fool then is he that shunneth it? who, though it be his way and his special Duty to seek it, yet neglecteth it; chusing rather to do nothing, or to do worse. Prov. 15. 14.

And do we not deserve great Blame, Displeasure and Disgrace from Mankind, if having such Opportunities of qualifying our selves to do good, and serve the Publick, we by our Idleness render our selves worthless and useless?

How, being slothful in our Business, can we answer for our violating the Wills, for abusing the Goodness, for perverting the Charity and Bounty of our worthy Founders and Benefactors, who gave us the good things we enjoy, not to maintain us in Idleness, but for Supports and Encouragements of our Industry? how can we excuse our selves from dishonesty and perfidious Dealing, seeing that we are admitted to these Enjoyments under Condition, and upon Confidence (confirmed by our free Promises and most solemn Engagements) of using them according to their pious Intent, that is in a diligent Prosecution of our Studies, in order to the Service of God, and of the Publick?

Let every Scholar, when he mis-spendeth an Hour, or sluggeth on his Bed, but imagine that he heareth the Voice of those glorious Kings or venerable Prelates, or worthy Gentlemen complaining thus, and rating him; Why, Sluggard, dost thou against my Will possess my Estate? Why dost thou presume to occupy the Place due to an industrious Person? Why dost thou forget or despise thy Obligation to my Kindness? Thou art an Usurper, a Robber, or a Purloiner of my Goods, which I never intended for such as thee; I challenge thee of Wrong to my self, and of Sacrilege toward my God, to whose Service I devoted those his Gifts to me.

How reproachful will it be to us, if that Expostulation may concern us, *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?* Prov. 17. 16.

If to be a Dunce or a Bungler in any Profession be shameful, how much more ignominious and infamous to a Scholar to be such? from whom all Men expect, that he should excel in intellectual Abilities; and be able to help others by his Instruction and Advice.

Nothing surely would more grate on the Heart of one, that hath a Spark of Ingenuity, of Modesty, of generous good Nature, than to be liable to such an Imputation.

To avoid it therefore (together with all the Guilt, and all the Mischiefs attending on Sloth) let each of us in God's Name, carefully mind his Business; And let the Grace and Blessing of God prosper you therein. *Amen.*

SERMON XXIII.

The Unſearchableneſs of God's Judgments.

ROM. XI. 33.

How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out.

THESE Words are the Cloſe of a Diſputation, wherein St. *Paul* was engaged with the Advocates of *Judaiſm*, concerning God's Providence toward his ancient People, in rejecting the greateſt Part of them upon their refuſal to embrace the *Chriſtian* Doctrine; and in admitting the *Gentile* World to favour, upon its compliance with the Overtures thereof propoſed in the *Goſpel*. In this Proceeding thoſe *Infidels* could not diſcern God's Hand, nor would allow ſuch a Diſpenſation worthy of him, advancing ſeveral Exceptions againſt it: God (ſaid they) having eſpouſed and conſecrated us to himſelf; having to our Fathers, in regard to their Piety, made ſo abſolute Promiſes of Benediction on their Poſterity; having conſequently endowed us with ſuch Privileges and choice Pledges of his Favour, having taken ſo much pains with us, and performed ſo great things in our behalf; having ſo long avowed, ſupported, and cheriſhed us; how can it well conſiſt with his Wiſdom, with his Juſtice, with his Fidelity, with his Conſtancy thus inſtantly to abandon and repudiate us? Doth not this Dealing argue his former Affections to have been miſ-placed? doth it not implead his ancient Covenant and Law of Imperfection? doth it not ſupplant his own Deſigns, and unravel all that he for ſo many Ages hath been doing? Upon ſuch Accounts did this Diſpenſation appear very ſtrange and ſcandalous to them: but St. *Paul* being infallibly aſſured of its Truth, doth undertake to vindicate it from all Miſpriſions, rendring a fair Account of it, and aſſigning for it many ſatisfactory Reaſons, drawn from the general Equity of the Caſe, from the Nature of God, his Attributes, and his Relations to Men; from the Congruity of this Proceeding to the Tenour of God's Providence, to his moſt ancient Purpoſes, to the true Intent of his Promiſes, to his expreſs Declarations and Predictions; to the ſtate of things in the World, and the preſſing Needs of all Mankind: Such Reaſons (I ſay, which I have not time more explicitly to relate) doth the Apoſtle produce in favour of this great Diſpenſation; the which did ſuffice to clear and juſtifie it from all their Objections; yet notwithſtanding after that he had ſteered his Diſcourſe through all theſe Rocks, he thought it ſafe to caſt Anchor; winding up the Conteſt in this modeſt Intimation, that whatever he could ſay, might not perhaps exhauſt the Difficulty, or void all Scruple; that therefore in this and in all ſuch Caſes, for entire Satisfaction, we ſhould have Recourſe to the incomprehenſible Wiſdom of God, who frequently in the courſe of his Providence doth act upon grounds, and ordereth things in Methods tranſcending our Ability to diſcover or trace: To conſider ſome Cauſes and Reaſons of which

which Incomprehensibility, and to ground thereon some practical Advices will be the Scope of my Discourse: The Reasons may be these.

1. As the Dealings of very wise Men sometimes are founded upon Maxims, and admit Justifications not obvious, nor penetrable by vulgar Conceit, so may God act according to Rules of Wisdom and Justice; which it may be quite impossible by our Faculties to apprehend, or with our Means to descry.

As there are natural Modes of Being and Operation (such as God's necessary Subsistence, his Production of things from nothing, his Eternity without Succession, his Immensity without Extension, his Prescience without Necessitation of Events, his ever acting, but never changing; and the like) so there may be prudential and moral Rules of proceeding far above our reach, so God himself telleth us: *As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Isa. 55. 8. Some of them we may be uncapable to know, because of our finite Nature; they being peculiar Objects of Divine Wisdom, and not to be understood by any Creature: For as God cannot impart the Power of doing all things possible, so may he not communicate the Faculty of knowing all things intelligible; that being indeed to ungod himself, or to deprive himself of his peerless Supremacy in Wisdom; hence is he stiled *the only wise God*; hence is he said to *dwell in light inaccessible*; hence he *chargeth the Angels with folly*; hence the most illuminate Seraphims do veil their Faces before him. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rom. 16. 27. Jude 25. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Job 4. 18. Isa. 6. 2.

Other such Rules we may not be able to perceive from the Meanness of our Nature, or our low Rank among Creatures; for beneath Omniscience there being innumerable Forms of Intelligence, in the lowest of these we sit, one Remove from Beasts; being endowed with Capacities suitable to that inferiour Station, and to those meaner Employments, for which we were designed and framed; whence our Mind hath a Pitch, beyond which it cannot soar; and things clearly intelligible to more noble Creatures, moving in a higher Orb, may be dark and unexplicable to us: *as an Angel of God, so is my Lord the King, to discern good and bad*, was an Expression importing this Difference, how those glorious Creatures do overtop us in intellectual Capacities. Psal. 103. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Sam. 14. 17, 20. 19. 27.

Also divers Notions not simply passing our Capacity to know, we are not yet in condition to ken, by reason of our Circumstances here, in this dark Corner of things, to which we are confined, and wherein we lie under many Disadvantages of attaining Knowledge: He that is shut up in a close Place, and can only peep through Chinks, who standeth in a Valley, and hath his Prospect intercepted, who is encompassed with Foggs, who hath but a dusky Light to view things by, whose Eyes are weak or foul, how can he see much or far, how can he discern things remote, minute or subtile, clearly and distinctly? Such is our Case; our Mind is pent up in the Body, and looketh only through those Clefts by which Objects strike our Sense; its Intuition is limited within a very small Compass; it resideth in an Atmosphere of Fancy, stuft with Exahalations from Temper, Appetite, Passion, Interest; its Light is scant and faint (for Sense and Experience do reach only some few gross Matters of Fact, Light infused, and Revelation imparted to us, proceed from arbitrary Dispensation, in definite Measures) our Ratiocination consequently from such Principles, must be very short and defective; nor are our Minds ever thoroughly sound, or pure and defecate from Prejudices; Hence no Wonder, that now we are wholly ignorant of divers great Truths, or have but a glimmering Notion of them, which we may, and hereafter shall come fully and clearly to understand: so that even the Apostles, the Secretaries of Heaven might say, *We know in part,* 1 Cor. 13 9, 12.

part, and we propheſie in part; We now ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face.

In fine, thoſe Rules of Equity or Experience, which we in our Tranſactions with one another do uſe (being derived from our Original Inclinations to like ſome good things, or from Notions ſtamped on our Soul when God made us according to his Image, from common Experience, from any kind of rational Collection, from the Preſcription of God's Word) if they be applied to the Dealings of God will be found very incongruous, or deficient; the Caſe being vaſtly altered from that infinite Diſtance in Nature and State between God and us; and from the immenſe Differences which his Relations toward us have from our Relations to one another.

Wherefore in divers Enquiries about Providence, to which our Curioſity will ſtretch it ſelf, it is impoſſible for us to be reſolved, and launching into them, we ſhall ſoon get out of our Depth, ſo as to ſwim in Diſſatisfaction, or to ſink into Diſtruſt: Why God made the World at ſuch an Inſtant, no ſooner or later; why he made it thus, not exempt from all Diſorder; why he framed Man (the Prince of viſible Creatures) ſo fallible and frail; ſo prone to Sin, ſo liable to Miſery; why ſo many things happen, offenſive to him, why his Gifts are diſtributed with ſuch Inequality? ſuch Queſtions we are apt to propound and to debate; but the Reſolution of them our Mind perhaps was not made to apprehend, nor in its moſt elevate Condition ſhall attain it; however in this ſtate we by no means can come at it; it at leaſt being kept cloſe from us among thoſe things, of which it is ſaid, *The*
Deut. 29. 30. *ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God*, in diſtinction from others, about which it is added, *But thoſe that are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever.*

In ſuch Caſes the abſolute Will, the Sovereign Authority, the pure Liberality of God do ſupply the Place of Reaſons, ſufficient, if not to ſatisfie the
Rom. 9. 20. Minds of Men fondly curious, yet to ſtop the Mouths of thoſe, who are
Iſa. 45. 9. boldly peremptory: The which are alledged, not with intent to imply that
Gen. 18. 25. God ever acteth unaccountably, or without higheſt Reaſon, but that ſome-
Ezek. 18. 25. times his Methods of acting are not fit Subjects of our Conception or Diſ-
Iſa. 5. 3. cuſſion; for otherwhile God appealeth to the Verdict of our Reaſon; when the Caſe is ſuch that we can apprehend it, and the Apprehenſion of it may conduce to good Purpoſes.

2. As the ſtanding Rules of God's acting, ſo the occaſional Grounds thereof are commonly placed beyond the Sphere of our Apprehenſion.

God is obliged to proſecute his own immutable Decrees; *working all*
Eph. 1. 11. *things*, as the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *according to the counſel of his own will*; which how can we any-wiſe come to diſcover? can we climb up above the Heaven of Heavens, and there unlock his Cloſet, rifle his Cabinet, and peruſe the
Rom. 11. 34. Records of everlaſting Deſtiny, by which the World is governed? No, *Who*
Iſa. 40. 13. *knoweth his mind, or hath been his counſellour? Who*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *hath*
Jer. 23. 18. *ſtood in the counſel of the Lord; or hath perceived and heard his word?*
Sap. 9. 13.

He doth *ſearch the hearts, and try the reins of men*; he doth * *weigh their ſpirits*, and *their works*; he doth *know their frame*, he doth *underſtand their thoughts afar off*; he perceiveth their cloſeſt Intentions, their deepeſt Contrivances, their moſt retired Behaviours; he conſequently is acquainted with their true Qualifications, Capacities and Merits; unto which he moſt juſtly and wiſely doth accommodate his Dealings with them; the which therefore muſt often thwart the Opinions and Expectations of us, who are ignorant of thoſe Particulars, and can only view the exteriour Face

* Prov. 16. 2. Iſa. 26. 7. 1 Sam. 2. 3. Pſal. 103. 14. 139. 2. 64. 6. Job 14. 16.

Ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ μόνα ὁρῶμεν τὰ πεφηγμένα· ὁ δὲ τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς, καὶ τὰ παῦτα δρώντων ὅλης αὐτὰς σκέπων, καὶ τούτῳ μᾶλλον, ἢ τοῖς ἔργοις διηκόνων ἐπιφέρει τὸ ληφθὲν. Theod. Ep. 3.

Face or Semblance of things: For as *Samuel*, in the caſe of preferring *David* before his Brethren, did ſay) *God ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. 16. 7.

God alſo hath a perfect Foreſight of contingent Events; he ſeeth upon what Pin each Wheel moveth, and with what Weight every Scale will be turned; he diſcerneth all the Connections, all the Entanglements of things, and what the Reſult will be upon the Combination, or the claſhing of numberleſs Cauſes; in Correſpondence to which Perceptions he doth order things conſiſtently, and conveniently; whereas we being ſtark blind, or very dim-ſighted in ſuch reſpects (ſeeing nothing future, and but few things preſent) cannot apprehend what is fit and feaſible; or why that is done, which appeareth done to us. Iſa. 45. 11.

God obſerveth in what relations, and what degrees of Compariſon (as to their Natures, their Vertues, their Conſequences) all things do ſtand, each toward others; ſo poiſing them in the Balance of right Judgment, as exactly to diſtinguiſh their juſt Weight and Worth; whereas we cannot tell what things to compare, we know not how to put them into the Scale, we are unapt to make due Allowances, we are unable to diſcern which ſide doth overweigh: In the immenſe Variety of Objects our Knowledge doth extend to few things eligible, nor among them can we pick out the beſt Competitors for our choice: Hence often muſt we be at great Loſſes in ſcanning the Deſigns, or tracing the Footſteps of Providence.

3. We are alſo uncapable thoroughly to diſcern the ways of Providence from our moral Defects, in ſome meaſure common to all Men; from our Stupidity, our Sloth, our Temerity, our Impatience, our Impurity of Heart, our Perverſeneſs of Will and Affections: we have not the Perſpicacity to eſpy the ſubtile Tracts, and ſecret Reſerves of Divine Wiſdom; we have not the Induſtry, with ſteady Application of Mind, to regard and meditate on God's Works; we have not the Temper and Patience to wait upon God, until he diſcover himſelf in the Accompliſhment of his Purpoſes; we have not that *bleſſed purity of heart*, which is requiſite to the *ſeeing God* in his ſpecial Diſpenſations, we have not that Rectitude of Will and Government of our Paſſions, as not to be ſcandalized at what God doeth, if it thwarteth our Conceit or Humour; ſuch Defects are obſervable in the beſt Men; who therefore have miſapprehended, have diſreliſhed, have fretted and murmured at the Proceedings of God; we might inſtance in *Job*, in *David*, in *Elias*, in *Jonah*, in the holy *Apoſtles* themſelves, by whoſe Speeches and Deportments in ſome caſes it may appear how difficult it is for us, who have *eyes of fleſh* (as *Job* ſpeaketh) and Hearts too never quite freed of Carnality, to ſee through, or fully to acquieſce in the Dealings of God. Matth. 5. 8. Job 10. 3.

It is indeed a Diſtemper incident to us, which we can hardly ſhun, or cure, that we are apt to meaſure the Equity and Expedience of things according to our Opinions and Paſſions; affecting conſequently to impoſe on God our ſilly Imaginations as Rules of his proceeding, and to conſtitute him the Executioner of our ſorry Paſſions; what we conceit fit to be done, that we take God bound to perform; when we feel our ſelves ſtirred, then we preſume God muſt be alike concerned: to our Apprehenſions every ſlight Inconvenience is a huge Calamity, every Scratch of Fortune is a ghaſtly Wound; God therefore, we think, ſhould have prevented it, or muſt preſently remove it; every pitiful Bauble, every trivial Accommodation is a matter of high Conſequence, which if God with-hold, we are ready to clamour on him; and wail as Children for want of a Triſle. Are we ſoundly angry or enflamed with Zeal? then *fire muſt come down from heaven*, then Thunder-bolts muſt fly about, then nothing but ſudden Woe and Vengeance Luke 9. 54.

geance are denounced; are we pleaſed? then Showers of Bleſſings muſt deſcend on the Heads; then Floods of Wealth muſt run into the Laps of our Favourites, otherwiſe we are not ſatisfied; and ſcarce can deem God awake, or mindful of his Charge. We do beyond meaſure hate or deſpiſe ſome Perſons, and to thoſe God muſt not afford any Favour, any Mercy, any Forbearance, or time of Repentance; we exceſſively admire or dote on others, and thoſe God muſt not touch or croſs; if he doth not proceed thus, he is in danger to forfeit his Authority: He muſt hardly be allowed to govern the World, in caſe he will not ſquare his Adminiſtrations to our fond Conceit, or froward Humour: Hence no wonder, that Men often are ſtumbled about Providence; For God will not rule according to their Fancy or Pleaſure (it would be a mad World if he ſhould) neither indeed could he do ſo if he would, their Judgments and their Deſires being infinitely various, inconſiſtent and repugnant. Again,

4. The Nature of thoſe Inſtruments which Divine Providence doth uſe in Adminiſtration of Human Affairs, hindereth us from diſcerning it: It is an Obſervation among *Philoſophers*, that the Footſteps of divine Wiſdom are, to Excluſion of doubt, far more conſpicuous in the Works of Nature, than in the Management of our Affairs; ſo that ſome who by Contemplation of natural Appearances were convinced of God's Exiſtence and his Protection of the World (who thence could not doubt but that an immenſe Wiſdom had erected the beautiful Frame of Heaven and Earth, had ranged the Stars in their Order and Courſes; had formed the Bodies and Souls of *Animals*, had provided for the Subſiſtence and Propagation of each *Species*, had ſetled and doth uphold the viſible World in its ſo comely and convenient State, that even ſuch Men) reflecting on the Courſe of Humane Tranſactions, have ſtaggered into Diſtruſt, whether a Divine Wiſdom doth ſit at the Helm of our Affairs; many thence hardly would admit God to be concerned in them, but ſuppoſed him to commit their Conduct to a fatal Swinge, or a caſual Fluctuation of obvious Cauſes: One great Reaſon of this Difference may be, that whereas the Inſtruments of Divine Power in Nature are in themſelves merely paſſive, or act only as they are acted by pure Neceſſity (as a Pen in Writing or a Hammer in ſtriking) being thence determinate, uniform, conſtant and certain in their Operation; whenever there any Footſteps of Counſel, any Tendency to an End, and Deviation from the common Tracks of Motion do appear, ſuch Effects cannot reaſonably be imputed merely to natural Cauſes, but to a ſuperiour Wiſdom, weilding them in ſuch a manner, and ſteering them to ſuch a Mark: but the viſible Engines of Providence in our Affairs are ſelf-moving Agents, working with Knowledge and Choice; the which, as in themſelves they are indeterminate, irregular and uncertain, ſo they are capable to be diverſified in numberleſs unaccountable Ways according to various Repreſentations of Objects, or by Influence of divers Principles inclining to judge and chuſe differently: Temper, Humour, Paſſion, Prejudice, Cuſtom, Example, together with Contingencies of Occaſion (depending on like Principles in adjacent free Cauſes) do move ſingly or combinedly, in Ways ſo implicate, to the various Production of ſo various Events, that nothing hardly can fall out, which may not with ſome plauſible Colour of Reaſon be derived from ſome one of thoſe Sources, or from a Complication of them: Nothing can appear ſo uncouth or extravagant, which may not be fathered on ſome Fetch of Wit, or ſome hitof Fancy, or Capricio of Humour, or ſome Tranſport of

Nam cum diſpoſiti quæſiſſem fœdera mundi,
Præſcriptoſque mari fines ——
—— *tunc omnia rebar*
Conſilio firmata Dei ——
Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adſpicerem ——
—— *rurſus labefacta cadebat*
Religio, &c.
Claud. *in* Ruff. 1.
Diod. Sic. *lib.* 15. *p.* 482.

of Passion, or some lucky Advantage, or on divers of those conspiring; whence in accounting for the Reason of such Events, Men deem they may leave out Providence as superfluous; especially considering, that usually Disorders and Defects, only imputable to Man's Will, do accompany and further such Events.

For instance, what other Cause would many think needful to assign for the Conveyance of *Joseph* into *Egypt*, than the Envy of his Brethren; for *Shimei*'s reviling *David*, than his base Malignity; for *David*'s numbering the People, than his wanton Pride; for *Jeroboam*'s Revolt, than his unruly Ambition; for *Job*'s being robb'd, than the theevish Disposition of the *Arabs*; for his being diseased, than a Redundance of bad Humours; for our *Lord*'s Suffering, than the spiteful Rage of the *Jewish* Rulers and People; together with the treacherous Avarice of *Judas*, and the corrupt Easiness of *Pilate*? These Events all of them are ascribed to God's Hand, and special Ordination; but Men could not see or avow it in them; what need will Men ever say in such cases to introduce God's Aid, when humane Means suffice to atchieve the Feat?

Gen. 45. 5. 50. 20. Psal. 105. 17. 2 Sam 16. 10. 2 Sam. 24. 1. 1 Kings 12. 15. 24. Job 1. 15, &c. Acts 2. 23. 4. 28.

5. Indeed, as in Nature, the Influences of Heaven, and of inferiour Causes so commonly in the Production of these Events, divine and humane Agency are so knit and twisted one with the other, that it is not easie to discriminate them, so as to sever the Bounds of common and special Providence; or to discern what God performeth by natural Instruments, what by superiour Efficacy; when the Balance turneth from our Inclinations, when it is cast from a Grain thrown in by divine Interposition; the Management of these Affairs being a Consort, wherein God's Wisdom beareth one part, Man's Free-will playeth another; Fortune and Occasion also do strike in, we not seeing the first, are prone to ascribe all the Harmony to the last, which are most obvious and visible.

Θεὸς μὲν πάντα, καὶ μὴ Θεὸν πύκα καὶ χαλεδ: τὰ ἀνθρώπινα κυβερνῶσι ξύμπαντα. Max. Tyr. *diss.* 3. & Plat.

6. The more apt we are to do thus, because the manner of Divine Efficacy is ever very soft and gentle: God disposeth things *fortiter & suaviter*; so as effectually to perform what he designeth, but in the most sweet and easie way: his Providence doth not hurry along like an impetuous rumbling Torrent, but glideth on as a smooth and still Current, with an irresistible, but imperceptible Force carrying things down therewith: without much ado, without any Clatter, by a Nod of his Head, by a Whisper of his Mouth, by a Turn of his Hand, he doth effect his Purposes: winding up a close Spring, he setteth the greatest Wheels in Motion; and thrusting in an insensible Spoak, he stoppeth the greatest Wheels in their career; injecting a Thought, exciting an Humour, presenting an Occasion, insinuating a petty Accident, he bringeth about the most notable Events. He doth so *fashion the hearts of men*, so *manage their hands*, so *guide their steps*, that even they who are acted by him cannot feel the least Touch upon them. For, *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters, he turneth it whereſoever he will*; that is, by secret Pipes, by obscure Chanels God conveyeth the Minds and Wills of greatest Persons (the chief Engines of his Providence) unto such Points of Resolution as he pleaseth, so that they seem to flow thither of their own accord, without any exteriour Direction or Impulse: Hence do his most effectual Operations slip by us without making Impression on our Minds, which are wont to apprehend things, as with a gross Palpability they do incur the Senses, so that the *Preacher*, comparing the Methods of Providence with the most occult Pro-

Sap. 8. 1. ἀυρώσως καὶ λεπτώς.

Θεῦ πνος ἐμβάλλοντος εἰς νῦν ἀνθρώπω. Plut. Timol.

Psal. 33. 15. Isaiah 41. 13. 42. 6. Prov. 16. 9. 20. 24. Jer. 10. 23. Job 33. 14. 23. 8.

Prov. 21. 1.

Eccl. 11. 5. ceedings in Nature, might well ſay, *As thou knoweſt not the way of the ſpirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, ſo thou knoweſt not the works of God, who maketh all.* Again,

7. God in his Progreſs toward the Atchievement of any Deſign, is not wont to go in the moſt direct and compendious ways, but commonly windeth about, and taketh a large compaſs, enfolding ſeveral other co-incident Purpoſes, ſome whereof may be no leſs conſiderable, than is that, which we deem moſt neceſſary, and affect to ſee diſpatched; but this Courſe ſeemeth tedious to us, who have not the Wit to perceive that Complexion of Ends, nor the Temper to wait for the Completion of them. If God, when we ſeem to need, doth not inſtantly appear in our Favour and Succour, if he doth not preſently vindicate Truth and Right; if he doth not nip wicked Deſigns in the Bud, and repreſs the firſt Onſets of outragious Violence; if for a while he ſuffereth the *tabernacles of robbers to proſper*, and *iniquity to lift up its horn*; then he is in a Slumber, quite unmindful or inſenſible of us; then he turneth aſide his Face, or doth behold what paſſeth, as an unconcerned Spectator; then he ſtandeth aloof, unready to help us; then doth he hold off his Hand, not medling in our Affairs; in ſuch caſes we are apt to cry out, *Eſtis ubi O ſuperi: How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget; how long wilt thou hide thy face? Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Awake, why ſleepeſt thou, O Lord? why ſtandeſt thou afar off? why withdraweſt thou thy hand? pluck it out of thy boſom: Return, O Lord, how long?* ſuch are our Prayers, ſuch our Expoſtulations; ſo is our blind Impatience prone to muſe and mutter; not conſidering how many good Deſigns God is carrying on in a calm and ſteady Pace, by well meaſured Steps, all which in due ſeaſon, when they are ripe for Accompliſhment, ſhall undoubtedly be effected; for, *The Lord*, as St. *Peter* ſaith, *is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, as ſome men count ſlackneſs, but is long-ſuffering toward all men*, that is, he certainly will expreſs his faithful Benignity toward good Men, yet ſo as alſo to extend his merciful Patience toward others; he ſo will tender the Intereſts of ſome, as concurrently to procure the Welfare of all, and accordingly will time his Proceedings, allowing the Leiſure and Opportunities requiſite thereto: He can, although we cannot, *wait to be gracious*; for as in him there are no Paſſions to precipitate Action, ſo to him there are no ſenſible Differences of time, *One day being with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day.*

Sil. Ital.
Pſal. 13. 1. 89. 46. 90. 13. 74. 10. 44. 24. 55. 1. 94. 3. 35. 17.
Pſal. 35. 17. Pſal. 44. 23. 35. 23. 7. 6.
Pſal. 74. 11. Pſal. 10. 1.
Pſal. 90. 13. 6. 4. 7. 7. 80. 14.
Pſal. 22. 1, 11, 19. 38. 2. 71. 12.
Vid. Hab. 1. 2——

(Jer. 23. 20.) 2 Pet. 3. 9, 10.

Iſa. 30. 18.

8. Again, God (as is the Property of every wiſe Agent) is wont to act variouſly, according to the State and Circumſtances of things, or to the Diſpoſitions and Capacities of Perſons; ſo as to do the ſame thing for different Ends, and different things for the ſame End; to apply one Inſtrument to ſeveral Uſes, and by ſeveral Inſtruments to work out one Purpoſe: ſo he afflicteth good Men out of Love for Trial and Improvement of their Vertues, bad Men in Diſpleaſure to illuſtrate his Power and Juſtice on them; he encourageth and bleſſeth the one, he puniſheth and curſeth the other with Proſperity; he reclaimeth both from Error and Sin by either of thoſe Methods, as their Temper and their Circumſtances do require: Whence it is very difficult for us ever from the kind of Accidents befalling Men to divine how far God is concerned in them, or to what particular Scope they are aimed; ſo that well might the *Preacher*, upon a careful Obſervation of ſuch Occurrences, eſtabliſh this Rule, *No man knoweth love, or hatred* (that is, the ſpecial Regard of God toward Men) *by all that is before them*;

Eccl. 9. 1, 2.

them; becauſe, *All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Farther,

9. There are different Ends which Providence in various Order and Meaſure doth purſue, which we, by reaſon of our dim Inſight and ſhort Proſpect cannot deſcry: God, as the univerſal and perpetual Governour of the World, in his diſpenſation of things, reſpecteth not only the Good of this or that Perſon, of one Nation or one Age; but often in ſome degree waving that, or taking care for it in a leſs remarkable way) hath a provident regard to the more extenſive Good of a whole People, of the World, of Poſterity; as he did order his Friend *Abraham* to wander in a ſtrange Land, for the Benefit of his Seed; *Joſeph* to be ſold, calumniated, and fettered for the Preſervation of his Family; our Lord to ſuffer thoſe grievous things for the Redemption of Mankind; the *Jews* to be rejected for the Salvation of the *Gentiles*: In ſuch caſes pur-blind Men obſerving Events to croſs particular and preſent Ends, but not being aware how conducible they may prove to general, remote, and more important Deſigns, can hardly be ſatisfied how God ſhould be concerned in them; the preſent, or that which lieth adjacent juſt under our Noſe, is all that we can or will conſider; and therefore muſt be ill Judges of what is done by all-provident Wiſdom. Hab. 3. 6.

10. Again, God permitteth things, bad in their own Nature, with regard to their Inſtrumental Uſe and Tendency; for that often the worſt things may be ordinable to the beſt Ends; things very bitter may work pleaſant Effects; upon the wildeſt Stock divine Husbandry can ingraft moſt excellent Fruit; Sin really, and ſuffering reputedly, are the worſt Evils, yet from them much Glory to God, and great Benefit to Men do accrue; even from the moſt wicked Act that ever was committed, from the moſt lamentable Event that ever did happen, Fruits admirably glorious, and immenſely beneficial did ſpring; yet uſually ſo blind are we as to be offended at ſuch things, and from them to raiſe Exceptions againſt Providence.

11. Alſo the Expediency of things to be permitted or croſſed, doth frequently conſiſt, not in themſelves ſingly taken, as particular Acts or Events, but in their Conjunction, or Reference to others, with which they may become ſubſervient toward a common End; ſo that divers things in themſelves extreamly bad, may by Combination or Colliſion engender good Effects; and thence prove fit Weapons or Tools of Providence; as the moſt deadly Poiſons may be ſo mixed, that curbing one another's Force, they may conſtitute a harmleſs Maſs, ſometimes a wholſome Medicine; but we poring on the ſimple Ingredients, and not conſidering how they may be tempered, or how applied by a skilful Hand, can hardly deem the Toleration of them congruous to Wiſdom. Farther,

12. That Providence ſometimes is obſcure and intricate, may be attributed to the Will of God, upon divers good Accounts deſigning it to be ſuch: *Verily* (ſaith the *Prophet*) *thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf, O God of Iſrael the Saviour.* Iſ. 45. 15. Pſal. 89. 46.

God commonly doth not intend to exert his Hand notoriouſly; for that whereas every ſpecial Interpoſition of his Hand is in effect a Miracle (ſurmounting the natural Power, or thwarting the ordinary Courſe of inferiour Cauſes) it doth not become him to proſtitute his miraculous Power, or to exert it otherwiſe than upon ſingular Occaſions, and for moſt weighty Cauſes: 'tis not conformable to the Tenour of his Adminiſtrations to convince Men againſt their Will, or by irreſiſtible Evidence to wring Perſwaſion from ſtubborn or ſtupid Minds; but to exerciſe the Wiſdom, and to prove the Ingenuity of well-diſpoſed Perſons, who upon competent Intimations, ſhall be capable to ſpell out, and forward to approve his Proceedings.

13. He will not glare forth in Discoveries so bright as to dazle, to confound our weak Sight; therefore he veileth his Face with a Cloud, and wrappeth his Power in some Obscurity; therefore *clouds and darkness are round about him; he maketh darkness his secret place; his Pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky.*

Hab. 3. 4. Psal. 97. 2. 18. 11.

14. He meaneth thereby to improve and exalt our Faith, being the less seen, that he may be the more believed; Faith never rising higher than when it doth soar to Objects beyond our Sight; when we can approve God's Wisdom and Justice in Occurrences surmounting our Conceit; when we can rely upon God's Word and Help, although the Stream of his Proceedings seemeth to cross our Hopes.

15. It is fit also that God many times designedly should act in Ways surpassing our Apprehension, and apt to baffle and puzzle our Reason, that he may appear God indeed, infinitely transcending us in perfection of Wisdom and Justice; or that we comprehending the Reason of his Actings, may not imagine our Wisdom comparable, our Justice commensurate to his; yea, that we in those respects do exceed him; for *That* (as *Tertullian* discourseth) *which may be seen, is less than the eyes that survey it; that which may be comprehended, is less than the hands that grasp it; that which may be valued, is less than the senses which rate it*; it is Gods being inestimable that makes him worthily esteemed; his being incomprehensible rendreth him adorable.

Quod videri communiter, quod comprehendi, quod æstimari potest, minus est oculis quibus occupatur, & manibus quibus contaminatur, & sensibus quibus invenitur. Tert. *Apol.* 17.

Hoc est quod Deum æstimari facit, dum æstimari non capit. Tert. 16.

16. The Obscurity of Providence doth indeed conciliate an awful Reverence toward it; for Darkness naturally raiseth a Dread of invisible Powers; we use to go on tremblingly, when we cannot see far about us; we regard none so much as those, whose Wisdom we find to over-reach ours, and whose Intentions we cannot sound; it was *Elihu*'s Observation, *With God is terrible Majesty, the Almighty we cannot find him out;—— men do therefore fear him.*

Job 37. 22, 23, 24.

17. It is also requisite, that God should dispose many Occurrences, cross to our vulgar Notions, and offensive to our carnal Sense, that we may thence be prompted to think of God, driven to seek him, engaged to mark him interposing in our Affairs; Men from disorderly and surprizing Accidents preposterously do conceive Doubts about Providence, as if in managing things, nothing odd, or amiss, would occur; whereas if no such Events did start up, they might be proner to question it, they would at least come to forget or neglect it; for if humane Transactions passed on as do the Motions of Nature, in a smooth Course, without any Rub or Disturbance, Men commonly would no more think of God than they do, when they behold the Sun rising, the Rivers running, the Sea flowing; they would not depend on his Protection, or have recourse to him for Succour; it is Difficulty and Distress seizing on them, which compel Men to implore God for Relief, which dispose them to see his Hand reaching it forth unto them; according to that in the *Psalm*; *When he slew them, then they sought him, they returned and enquired early after God, they remembred that God was their rock, and the most high God their redeemer.* Again,

Psal. 78. 34.

18. It is needful that the present Course of Providence should not be transparently clear and satisfactory, that we may be well assured concerning a future Account, and forced in our Thoughts to recur thither for a Resolution of all such emergent Doubts and Difficulties; for if all Accompts were apparently stated and discharged here; if now Right did ever prevail, and Iniquity were suppressed; if Vertue were duly crowned, and Vice deservedly scourged, who would hope or fear an After-reckoning?

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This indeed is the grand Cause, why Providence now doth appear so cloudy, that Men consider not how our Affairs have no compleat Determination, or final Issue here; things now are doing and not done; in a Progress and Tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a State of Consistence and Perfection; this not being the Place of deciding Causes, or dispensing Rewards; but a State of Probation of Work, of Travel, of Combat, of running for the Prize, of sowing toward the Harvest; a State of Liberty to follow our own Choice, and to lay the ground of our Doom; of falling into Sin, and of rising thence by Repentance; of God's exercising Patience and exhibiting Mercy: wherefore as we cannot well judge of an artificial Work by its first Draughts, or of a Poem by a few Scenes, but must stay till all be finished or acted through; so we cannot here clearly discern the entire Congruity of providential Dispensations to the Divine Attributes, the *Catastrophe* or utmost Resolution of things is the general Judgment, wherein the deep Wisdom, the exact Justice, the perfect Goodness of God will be displayed to the full Satisfaction or Conviction of all Men; when God's Honour will be thoroughly vindicated, his despised Patience, and his abused Grace will be avenged; every Case will be rightly tried, every Work will be justly recompenced, all Accompts will be set streight; in the mean time divers things must occur, unaccountable to us, looking upon things as they now stand absolutely before us, without Reference to that Day: Considering this may induce us to suspend our Opinion about such Matters, allowing God to go through with his Work before we censure it, not being so quick and precipitate as to forestall his Judgment; and surely would we but observe that reasonable Advice of St. *Paul*, *Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come*, our chief Doubts would be resolved, our shrewdest Exceptions against Providence would be voided.

Chrys. *Tom.* 7. *p.* 15.

Rom. 2. 7.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

These are the chief Reasons of the Point, which Meditation did suggest; upon it (for it is not a Point merely speculative, but pregnant with useful Consequences) divers practical Applications may be grounded, which the time scarcely will allow me to name.

1. It should render us modest and sober in our Judgment about providential Occurrences, not pretending thoroughly to know the Reasons of God's Proceedings, or to define the Consequences of them; for it is plainly fond Arrogance or profane Imposture to assume perfect Skill in that which passeth our Capacity to learn.

Eccluſ. 3. 20. Pſal. 131. 1.

2. It should make us staunch and cautious of grounding Judgment or Censure upon present Events about any Cause, or any Person; for it is notorious Temerity to pass Sentence upon grounds uncapable of Evidence.

Luke 13. 1.

3. It should repress wanton Curiosity, which may transport us beyond our Bounds in Speculation of these mysterious Intrigues; so that we shall lose our Labour and Time, shall discompose our Minds, shall plunge ourselves into vain Errors or anxious Doubts.

Job 11. 12. Sap. 9. 13. Job 42. 3.

4. It should keep us from Conceitedness and Confidence in our own Wisdom; for how can we conceit highly of that, or much confide in it, which we find so unable to penetrate the Reason of most common and obvious Appearances; so *non-pluſt* in its Enquiries, so defeated in its Expectations, so mistaken in its Judgments of things.

Job 40. 4. 42. 2. Pſal. 73. 22. 39. 9.

5. It should preserve us from Infidelity, and from Despair upon account of any cross Accidents occurring here; for 'tis unreasonable to disbelieve a Notion, otherwise well grounded, because we cannot assoil Scruples or Cavils drawn from Matters inscrutable to us; 'tis foolish to despair of a good E-

Event, upon Appearances, whereof we cannot apprehend the full Reason, or final Result.

2 Kings 20 9. Mat. 16. 23. 6. It should prevent our taking Offence, or being discontented at any Events rising up before us; for to be displeased at that, which a superiour Wisdom, unsearchable to us, doth order, is to be displeased at we know not what, or why, which is childish Weakness, to fret and wail at that, which for all we can see, proceedeth from good Intention, and tendeth to good Issue, is pitiful Frowardness.

Eccles. 8. 11. 7. It should guard us from Security, or from presuming upon Impunity for our Miscarriages: For seeing God doth not always clearly and fully discover his Mind, it is vain from God's Reservedness to conclude his Unconcernedness; or because he is now patient, that he never will be just in chastizing our Offences.

8. It should quicken our Industry in observing and considering the Works of Providence; for since they are not easily discernible, and the discerning them in some measure is sometimes of great use, it is needful that we be very diligent in contemplation of them; the fainter our Light is, the more attent we should be in looking; the knottier the Subject, the more earnest should be our Study on it.

Isaiah 26. 11. 5. 12.

9. It should oblige us to be circumspect and wary in our Conversation; for the darker the Way is, the more careful should be our Walking therein, lest we err, lest we stumble, lest we strike on somewhat hurtful to us.

Jer. 10. 23. 10. It should engage us constantly to seek God, and to depend on him, for the Protection and Conduct of his Grace, which is the only Clew, that can lead us safely through this intricate Labyrinth of worldly Contingencies.

Psal. 36. 6. 92. 5. Apoc. 15. 3. 19. 2. 11. In fine, it should cause us humbly to admire and adore that Wisdom, which governeth the World in ways no less great and wonderful than just and holy: For *Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord, God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou king of Saints.*

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XXIV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

OBedience unto Spiritual Guides and Governours is a Duty of great Importance; the which to declare and press is very seasonable for these times, wherein so little regard is had thereto; I have therefore pitched on this Text, being an Apostolical Precept, briefly and clearly enjoining that Duty: and in it we shall consider and explain these two Particulars: 1. The Persons to whom Obedience is to be payed. 2. What that

that Obedience doth import, or wherein it conſiſteth: and together with Explication of the Duty, we ſhall apply it, and urge its Practice.

I. As to the Perſons unto whom Obedience is to be performed, they are, generally ſpeaking, all ſpiritual Guides, or Governours of the Church (thoſe *who ſpeak to us the word of God, and who watch for our ſouls*, as they are deſcrib'd in the Context) expreſſed here by a Term very ſignificant and appoſite, as implying fully the Nature of their Charge, the Qualification of their Perſons, their Rank and Privileges in the Church, together conſequently with the grounds of Obligation to the correſpondent Duties toward them. There are in holy Scripture divers Names and Phraſes appropriate to them, each of them denoting ſome eminent part of their Office, or ſome Appurtenance thereto; but this ſeemeth of all moſt comprehenſive; ſo that unto it all the reſt are well reducible: The Term is ἡγέμενοι, that is, *Leaders*, or *Guides*, or *Captains*; which properly may denote the ſubſequent particulars in way of Duty, or Privilege appertaining to them. Heb. 13. 7, 17.

1. It may denote Eminence of Dignity, or Superiority to others: that they are (as it is ſaid of *Judas* and *Silas* in the *Acts*) ἄνδρες ἡγέμυοι ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, *principal men among the brethren:* for to *lead*, implieth Precedence, which is a Note of Superiority and Preeminence. Hence are they ſtiled πρεσβῦτες, *Preſidents* or *Prelates*; οἱ πρῶτοι, the *firſt* or *prime* Men; ὁ μείζονες, the *greater*, Majors or Grandees among us: *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that will be the firſt among you, let him be your ſervant*; and *He that is greater among you, let him be as the younger*; *and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve*; where ὁ μείζων, and ὁ ἡγέμυν, (the *greater* and the *Leader*) are Terms equivalent, or interpretative the one of the other; and our Lord in thoſe Places as he preſcribeth Humility of Mind and Demeanour, ſo he implieth difference of Rank among his Diſciples: whence to render eſpecial Reſpect and Honour to them, as to our Betters, is a Duty often enjoined. Acts 15. 22. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Rom. 12. 8. 1 Theſſ. 5. 12. Mat. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26. Phil. 2. 29. 1 Theſſ. 5. 13. 1 Tim. 5. 17.

2. It doth imply Power and Authority: Their Superiority is not barely grounded on perſonal Worth or Fortune; it ſerveth not merely for Order, and Pomp; but it ſtandeth upon the nature of their Office, and tendeth to Uſe: They are by God's Appointment enabled to exerciſe Acts of Power; to command, to judge, to check, controul, and chaſtiſe in a ſpiritual way; in order to ſpiritual Ends; (the Regulation of God's Worſhip and Service, the Preſervation of Order and Peace, the promoting of Edification in divine Knowledge in Holineſs of Life) ſo are they ἡγέμενοι, as that Word in common Uſe (as the Word ἡγεμὼν of kin to it) doth ſignifie *Captains* and *Princes*; importing Authority to command and rule; whence the *Hebrew* Word נָשִׂיא, a *Prince*, is uſually rendred by it; and ὁ ἡγέμεν, is the Title, attributed to our Lord, to expreſs his kingly Function, being the ſame with ἀρχηγὸς, the *Prince* or *Captain.*) Hence are they otherwiſe ſtiled ὑποφῆται, (*Governors*) ἐπίσκοποι, (*Overſeers*, or *Superintendents*) as St. Jerome rendreth it) *Paſtors* (a Word often ſignifying *Rule*, and attributed to civil Governours) πρεσβυτερ, (*Elders*, or *Senators*; the Word denoteth not merely Age, but Office and Authority) οἱ ἐπιμελῦντες, *ſuch as take care for*, the *Curators* or *Supraviſors of the Church*: Hence alſo they are ſignally and ſpecially in relation unto God ſtiled δῦλοι (*the Servants*) διάκονοι (*the Miniſters*) ὑπηρέται (*the Officers*) λειτυργοὶ (*the publick Agents*) οἰκονόμοι (*the Stewards*) συνεργοὶ (*the Coadjutors*, or Aſſiſtants) πρέσβεις (*the Legates*) ἄγγελοι (*the Angels*, or Meſſengers) *of God*; which Titles imply, that God by them, as his Subſtitutes and Inſtruments, doth Mat. 2. 6. Acts 5. 31. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Acts 20. 28. Mat. 2. 6. Pſalm 78. 71. 1 Pet. 5. 2. 2 Sam. 5. 2. 7. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 24. Rom. 15. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2, 3. 9. 6. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 4. Tit. 1. 2. Gal. 4. 14. Apoc. 1. 29.

doth administer the Affairs of his spiritual Kingdom; that as by secular Magistrates (his Vicegerents and Officers) he manageth his universal temporal Kingdom, or governeth all Men in order to their worldly Peace and Prosperity; so by these spiritual Magistrates he ruleth his Church, toward its spiritual Welfare and Felicity.

3. The Word also doth imply Direction or Instruction; that is, Guidance of People in the way of Truth and Duty, reclaiming them from Error and Sin; This, as it is a means hugely conducing to the Design of their Office, so it is a principal Member thereof: whence διδάσκαλοι *Doctors*, or Masters in Doctrine, is a common Name of them; and to be διδακτικοί, *able and apt to teach* (ἱκανοὶ διδάξαι and πρόθυμοι) is a chief Qualification of their Persons; and to *attend on teaching*, to *be instant in preaching*, to *labour in the word and doctrine* are their most commendable Performances; Hence also they are called *Shepherds*, because they feed the Souls of God's People with the Food of wholsome Instruction; *Watchmen*, because they observe Mens ways, and warn them when they decline from right, or run into Danger; the *Messengers* of God, because they declare God's Mind and Will unto them for the Regulation of their Practice.

Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Rom. 12. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 28. 2. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 16. 5. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Col. 1. 28.

4. The Word farther may denote exemplary Practice; for to lead implieth so to go before, that he who is conducted may follow; as a Captain marcheth before his Troop; as a Shepherd walketh before his Flock, as a Guide goeth before the Traveller, whom he directeth; hence they are said to be, and enjoined to behave themselves, *as patterns of the flock*; and the People are charged to imitate and follow them.

1 Pet. 5. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 12. Phil. 3. 17. Tit. 2. 7. 2 Thess. 3. 9, 7. Heb. 3. 7. 1 Thess. 1. 6. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 4. 16.

Such in general doth the Word here used imply the Persons to be, unto whom Obedience is prescribed; but there is farther some Distinction to be made among them; there are Degrees and Subordinations in these Guidances; some are in regard to different Persons both impowered to guide, and obliged to follow or obey.

The Church is *acies ordinata*, a well marshalled Army, wherein under the *Captain-General of our faith and salvation* (*the Head of the Body*, the Sovereign Prince and Priest, the *Arch-Pastor*, the chief *Apostle of our profession*, and *Bishop of our Souls*) there are divers Captains serving in fit Degrees of Subordination; Bishops commanding large Regiments, Presbyters ordering less numerous Companies; all which by the Bands of common Faith, of mutual Charity, of Holy Communion, and Peace being combined together, do in their respective Stations govern and guide, are governed and guided: The Bishops, each in his Precincts guiding more immediately the Priests subject to them; the Priests, each guiding the People committed to his charge; all Bishops and Priests being guided by Synods established or congregated upon emergent Occasion; many of them ordinarily by those principal Bishops, who are regularly settled in a Presidency over them; according to the Distinctions constituted by God and his Apostles, or introduced by Humane Prudence, as the Preservation of Order and Peace (in various times and Circumstances of things) hath seemed to require; to which Subordination the two great *Apostles* may seem to have regard, when they bid us ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἀλλήλοις, *to be subject to one another*; their Injunction at least may (according to their general Intent, which aimeth at the Preservation of Order and Peace) be well extended so far.

1 Pet. 5. 4. Heb. 3. 1.

1 Pet. 5. 5: Eph. 5. 21. Phil. 2. 3: Ὑποτασσέσθω ἕκαστος τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ καθὼς καὶ ἐτέθη ἐν τοῖς χαρίσμασιν αὐτοῦ. Clem. *ad* Corinth. *p.* 49.

Of

Of this distinction there was never in ancient times made any question, nor did it seem disputable in the Church, except to one Malecontent (*Arrius*) who did indeed get a name in Story, but never made much noise, or obtained any vogue in the World: very few followers he found in his heterodoxy; No great Body even of *Hereticks* could find cause to dissent from the Church in this point; but all *Arians*, *Macedonians*, *Novatians*, *Donatists*, &c. maintained the distinction of Ecclesiastical Orders among themselves, and acknowledged the duty of the inferiour Clergy to their Bishops: and no wonder, seeing it standeth upon so very firm and clear grounds; upon the reason of the Case, upon the testimony of Holy Scripture, upon general tradition and unquestionable monuments of Antiquity, upon the common judgment and practice of the greatest Saints, Persons most renowned for Wisdom and Piety in the Church. Cyp. *Ep.* 10. *Ep.* 12. *Ep.* 27. *Ep.* 65.

Reason plainly doth require such Subordinations; for that without them it is scarce possible to preserve any durable concord, or Charity in Christian Societies; to establish any decent Harmony in the Worship and Service of God, to check odious Scandals, to prevent or repress baneful Factions, to guard our Religion from being overspread with pernicious Heresies, to keep the Church from being shattered into numberless Sects, and thence from being crumbled into nothing; in fine, for any good time to uphold the profession and practice of Christianity it self: for how if there be not settled Corporations of Christian People, having bulk and strength sufficient by joynt endeavour to maintain the truth, honour, and interest of their Religion, if the Church should only consist of independent and incoherent Particles (like Dust or Sand) easily scattered by any Wind of opposition from without, or by any commotion within; if *Christendom* should be merely a *Babel* of confused Opinions and Practices, how, I say, then could Christianity subsist? how could the Simple among so discordant apprehensions be able to discern the truth of it, how would the Wise be tempted to dislike it, being so mangled and disfigured? what an object of contempt and scorn would it be to the profaner World, in such a Case? It needeth therefore considerable Societies to uphold it; but no Society (especially of any large extent) can abide in order and peace, under the management of equal and co-ordinate Powers; without a single undivided Authority, enabled to moderate Affairs, and reduce them to a Point, to arbitrate emergent Cases of difference, to put good Orders in execution, to curb the adversaries of Order and Peace; these things cannot be well performed, where there is a parity of many Concurrents, apt to dissent, and able to check each other; no *Democracy* can be supported without borrowing somewhat from *Monarchy*; no Body can live without a Head; an Army cannot be without a General, a Senate without a President, a Corporation without a Supreme Magistrate: this all experience attesteth; this even the chief impugners of *Episcopal* presidency do by their practice confess; who for prevention of disorder have been fain of their own heads to devise Ecclesiastical Subordinations of *Classes*, *Provinces* and *Nations*; and to appoint *Moderatours* (or temporary Bishops) in their Assemblies; so that Reason hath forced the Dissenters from the Church to imitate it.

Ecclesiæ salus in summi Sacerdotis dignitate consistit, cui non exors quædam, & ab omnibus detur eminens potestas tot in Ecclesiâ efficientur schismata, quod sacerdotes. Hier. in Lucif.

Nec Presbiterorum cœtus ritè constitutus dici potest, in quo nullus sit ἡγέμων. Bez. *de Grad. Min. cap.* 22.

Essentiale fuit, quod ex Dei Ordinatione perpetua necesse fuit, est, & erit, ut Presbyterio quispiam & loco & dignitate Primus actioni gubernandæ præsit cum eo, quod ipsi divinitùs attributum est jure. Bez. *de Min. Evang. Grad. c.* 23. *p.* 153.

If there be not Inspectors over the Doctrine and Manners of the common Clergy, there will be many who will say and do any thing; they will

will in teaching pleaſe their own Humour, or ſooth the People, or ſerve their own Intereſts; they will indulge themſelves in a licentious manner of Life; they will claſh in their Doctrines, and ſcatter the People, and draw them into Factions.

It is alſo very neceſſary for preſerving the unity and communion of the Parts of the Catholick Church; ſeeing ſingle Perſons are much fitter to maintain correſpondence, than headleſs Bodies.

The very Credit of Religion doth require, that there ſhould be Perſons raiſed above the common Level, and endued with eminent Authority, to whoſe care the promoting it ſhould be committed; for ſuch as the Perſons are who manage any Profeſſion, ſuch will be the reſpect yielded thereto; if the Miniſters of Religion be Men of Honour and Authority, Religion it ſelf will be venerable; if *thoſe* be mean, that will become contemptible.

Apoc. 2, 3, &c. The Holy Scripture alſo doth plainly enough countenance this Diſtinction; for therein we have repreſented one *Angel* preſiding over principal Churches, which contained ſeveral *Presbyters*; therein we find Epiſcopal Ordination, and Juriſdiction exerciſed; we have one Biſhop conſtituting *Presbyters* in divers *Cities* of his *Dioceſe*; ordering all things therein concerning Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline; judging Presbyters, rebuking, μετὰ παρρησίας πάσης, *with all authority* (or imperiouſneſs, as it were; *Tit.* 2. 15.) and reconciling Offenders, ſecluding Hereticks, and ſcandalous Perſons.

Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 17, 19, 20, 22, &c.

In the *Jewiſh* Church there were an *High-Prieſt*, *Chief-Prieſt*, a *Sanhedrin*, or *Senate*, or *Synod*.

The Government of Congregations among God's ancient People (which it is probable was the Pattern that the *Apoſtles*, no affecters of needleſs Innovation, did follow in eſtabliſhing Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline among Chriſtians) doth hereto agree; for in their *Synagogues*, anſwering to our Chriſtian Churches, they had as their *Elders* and *Doctours*, ſo over them an ἀρχισυνάγωγος, the *Head* of the *Elderſhip*, and *Preſident* of the *Synagogue*. ראש הקהל

The primitive general uſe of Chriſtians moſt effectually doth back the Scripture, and interpret it in favour of this Diſtinction; ſcarce leſs than demonſtrating it conſtituted by the *Apoſtles*; for how otherwiſe is it imaginable, that all the *Churches* founded by the *Apoſtles* in ſeveral moſt diſtant, and disjoyned places (at *Jeruſalem*, at *Antioch*, at *Alexandria*, at *Epheſus*, at *Corinth*, at *Rome*) ſhould preſently conſpire in acknowledgement and uſe of it? how could it without apparent Confederacy be formed, how could it creep in without notable clatter, how could it be admitted without conſiderable oppoſition, if it were not in the Foundation of thoſe Churches laid by the *Apoſtles*? How is it likely, that in thoſe Times of grievous Perſecution falling chiefly upon the *Biſhops* (when to be eminent among Chriſtians yielded ſlender Reward, and expoſed to extreme hazard; when to ſeek Preeminence was in effect to court Danger and Trouble, Torture and Ruine) an ambition of irregularly advancing themſelves above their Brethren ſhould ſo generally prevail among the ableſt and beſt Chriſtians? How could thoſe famous Martyrs for the Chriſtian Truth be ſome of them ſo unconſcionable as to affect, others ſo irreſolute as to yield to ſuch injurious Encroachments? and how could all the Holy Fathers (Perſons of ſo renowned, ſo approved Wiſdom and Integrity) be ſo blind as not to diſcern ſuch a Corruption, or ſo bad as to abett it? how indeed could all God's Church be ſo weak as to conſent in Judgment, ſo baſe as to comply in Practice with it? In fine, how can we conceive, that all the beſt

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monuments of antiquity down from the beginning (the *Acts*, the *Epistles*, the *Histories*, the *Commentaries*, the *Writings* of all sorts coming from the Blessed *Martyrs*, and most Holy *Confessors* of our faith) should conspire to abuse us; the which do speak nothing but *Bishops*; long *Catalogues* and rows of *Bishops* succeeding in this and that *City*; *Bishops* contesting for the faith against *Pagan* Idolaters, and *Heretical* corrupters of Christian Doctrine; *Bishops* here teaching, and planting our religion by their labours, there suffering and watering it with their blood.

I could not but touch this point: But I cannot insist thereon; the full discussion of it, and vindication of the truth from the cavils advanced against the truth by modern dissenters from the Church, having employed voluminous Treatises; I shall only further add, that if any Man be so dully, or so affectedly ignorant as not to see the reason of the case, and the dangerous consequences of rejecting this ancient form of discipline; if any be so overweeningly presumptuous, as to question the faith of all History, or to disavow those Monuments and that Tradition, upon the testimony whereof even the truth and certainty of our Religion, and all its sacred Oracles do rely; if any be so perversely contentious, as to oppose the custom, and current practice of the Churches through all Ages down to the last Age; so self-conceitedly arrogant, as to condemn or slight the judgment, and practice of all the Fathers (together also with the opinion of the later most grave *Divines*, who have judged Episcopal presidency needful, or expedient, where practicable) so peevishly refractary as to thwart the setled order of that Church, in which he was baptized, together with the Law of the Countrey, in which he was born; upon such a person we may look as one utterly invincible, and intractable: So weak a judgment, and so strong a will who can hope by reason to convert? I shall say no more to that Point. 1 Cor. 11.16.

The ἡγούμενοι then, (the Guides and Governours) in our *Text* are primarily the *Bishops*, as the superiour and chief Guides, each in his place according to order peaceably established; then secondarily the *Presbyters* in their Station as Guides inferiour, together with the *Deacons* as their assistants; such the Church always hath had, and such by God's blessing, our Church now hath, toward whom the duty of obedience is to be performed.

To the consideration of that I should now proceed, but first it seemeth expedient to remove a main obstruction to that performance; which is this; a misprision, or doubt concerning the persons of our Guides and Governours; for in vain it would be to teach or persuade us to obey them, if we do not know who they are, or will not acknowledge them: For as in Religion it is *Primus Deorum cultus Deos credere*, *The first worship of God is to believe God* (as *Seneca* saith) so it is the first part of our obedience to our Governours to avow them; it is at least absolutely prerequisite thereto. It was of old a precept of St. *Paul* to the *Thessalonians*: *We beseech you Brethren to know those, who labour among you; and preside over you*; and another to the *Corinthians*; *Submit your selves* (saith he) *to such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*---then he subjoineth ἐπιγινώσκετε τοὺς τοιούτους, *acknowledge such*; there were, it seemeth, those in the *Apostolical* times, who would not know, or acknowledge their guides; there were even those, who would not *admit* the *Apostles* themselves; (as Saint *John* saith of *Diotrephes*) who *resisted their words* (as St. *Paul* saith of *Alexander*) to whom the *Apostles* were not *Apostles*, as St. *Paul* intimateth concerning some in regard to himself; there were then *Pseud-apostles*, who excluded the *true Apostles*, intruding themselves into that high office: Sen. Ep. 95. 1 Thess. 5.12. 1 Cor. 16.16, 18. 3 John 10. 2 Tim. 4.15.

2 Cor. 9. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 13. Phil. 3. 2. No wonder then it may be, that now in these dregs of time, there should be many, who disavow, and desert their true Guides, transferring the observance due to them upon bold pretenders; who are not indeed Guides, but Seducers; not Governours, but Usurpers, and sacrilegious Invaders of this holy Office: The duty we speak of cannot be secured without preventing or correcting this grand mistake; and this we hope to compass by representing a double character or description, one of the *true Guides*, another of the *counterfeits*, by comparing which we may easily distinguish them, and consequently be induced dutifully to avow and follow the one sort, wisely to disclaim and decline the other.

Those, I say, then, who constantly do profess, and teach that sound and wholsome Doctrine, which was delivered by our Lord, and his Apostles in word and writing, was received by their Disciples in the primitive Churches, was transmitted and confirmed by general tradition, was sealed by the bloud of the blessed *Martyrs*, and propagated by the labours of the Holy Fathers; the which also manifestly recommendeth and promoteth true reverence and piety toward God, justice and charity toward Men, order and quiet in humane Societies, purity and sobriety in each Man's private conversation:

Those who celebrate the true worship of God, and administer the Holy Mysteries of our religion in a serious, grave, decent manner, purely and without any notorious corruption either by hurtful errour, or superstitious foppery, or irreverent rudeness, to the advancement of God's honour, and edification of the participants in vertue and piety.

Those who derive their authority by a continued succession from the *Apostles*; who are called unto, and constituted in their office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the institution of God, and the constant practice of his Church; according to rules approved in the best and purest Ages; who are prepared to the exercise of their function by the best education, that ordinarily can be provided, under sober discipline, in the Schools of the Prophets, who thence by competent endowments of mind, and useful furniture of good learning, acquired by painful study, become qualified to guide and instruct the people: Who after previous examination of their abilities, and probable testimonies concerning their manners (with regard to the qualifications of incorrupt doctrine, and sober conversation
1 Tim. 3. 7. 10. prescribed by the *Apostles*) are adjudged fit for the office; who also in a pious, grave, solemn manner, with invocation of God's blessing, by *laying on the hands of the Presbytery* are admitted thereunto.

Those whose practice in guiding and governing the people of God is not managed by arbitrary, uncertain, fickle, private fancies or humours, but regulated by standing Laws; framed (according to general directions extant in Holy Scripture) by pious and wise persons, with mature advice, in accommodation to the seasons and circumstances of things for common edification, order and peace.

Those who, by virtue of their good principles, in their disposition and demeanour appear sober, orderly, peaceable, yielding meek submission to Government, tendring the Churches peace, upholding the communion of the Saints, abstaining from all schismatical, turbulent and factious practices.

Those also, who are acknowledged by the Laws of our Countrey, an
1 Pet. 2. 13. obligation to obey whom is part of that *humane constitution*, unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's Law) indispensibly bound to submit; whom our Sovereign, God's Vicegerent and the nursing Father of his Church among us (unto whom in all things high respect

reſpect in all lawful things entire obedience is due) doth command and encourage us to obey:

Thoſe, I ſay, to whom this character plainly doth agree, we may reaſonably be aſſured, that they are our true Guides and Governours, whom we are obliged to follow and obey: For what better aſſurance can we in reaſon deſire? what more proper marks can be aſſigned to diſcern them by? what methods of conſtituting ſuch needful officers can be ſetled more anſwerable to their deſign, and uſe? how can it be evil or unſafe to follow guides authorized by ſuch warrants, conformed to ſuch patterns, endowed with ſuch diſpoſitions, acting by ſuch principles and rules? can we miſtake, or miſcarry by complying with the great body of God's Church through all Ages, and particularly with thoſe great Lights of the Primitive Church, who by the excellency of their knowledge, and the integrity of their virtue have ſo illuſtrated our Holy Religion?

There are on the other hand ſufficiently plain characters, by which we may deſcry ſeducers, and falſe pretenders to guide us.

Thoſe who do ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, *teach otherwiſe*, or diſcourſe from the good ancient wholſome Doctrine, revealed in the Holy *Scripture*, atteſted by *Univerſal Tradition*, profeſſed, taught, maintained to death by the Primitive *Saints* and *Martyrs*; who affect novelties, uncouth notions, big words, and dark Phraſes, who dote on curious empty ſpeculations, and idle queſtions, which engender ſtrife, and yield no good fruit. 1 Tim. 6. 3. 1. 3, 4. Gal. 1. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 4. 6. 4, 20. 2 Tim. 2. 14, 16, 23. Tit. 3. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 18.

Thoſe who ground their opinions, and warrant their proceedings not by clear teſtimonies of divine revelation, by the dictates of ſound reaſon, by the current authority of wiſe and good Men, but by the ſuggeſtions of their own fancy, by the impulſes of their paſſion, and zeal, by pretences to ſpecial inſpiration, by imaginary neceſſities, and ſuch like fallacious rules. *Ipſorum ordinationes temerariæ, inconſtantes, leves,* Tertull.

Thoſe who by counterfeit ſhews of mighty zeal, and extraordinary affection, by affected forms of ſpeech, by pleaſing notions, by propheſying *ſmooth things*, *daubing* and *glozing*, by various artifices of flattery and fraud attract and abuſe weak and heedleſs people.

Thoſe who without any apparent commiſſion from God, or allowable call from Men, or extraordinary neceſſity of the caſe, in no legal or regular way, according to no cuſtom received in God's Church, do intrude themſelves into the office, or are only aſſumed thereto by ignorant, unſtable, giddy, factious people, ſuch as thoſe of whom St. *Paul* ſaith, that *according to their own Luſts they heap up teachers to themſelves, having itching ears.* 2 Tim. 4. 3.

Hi ſunt qui ſe ultrò apud temerarios convenas ſine divina diſpoſitione præfecerunt, qui ſe præpoſitos ſine ullâ ordinationis lege conſtituunt, qui nemine Epiſcopatum dante Epiſcopi ſibi nomen aſſumunt. Cypr. *de Un. Eccl. p.* 256.

Thoſe who are not in reaſonable ways fitly prepared, not duly approved, not competently authorized, not orderly admitted to the office, according to the preſcriptions of God's Word, and the practice of his Church; not entring into the fold by the door, but breaking through, or clambering over the fences of ſober diſcipline.

Thoſe who in their mind, their principles, their deſigns, and all their practice appear void of that charity, that meekneſs, that calmneſs, that gravity, that ſincerity, that ſtability, which qualifie worthy and true Guides: Who in the diſpoſition of their mind are froward, fierce, and ſtubborn, in their principles looſe and ſlippery, in their deſigns and behaviour turbulent, diſorderly, violent, deceitful: Who regard not order or peace, but wantonly raiſe ſcandals, create diſſentions, abett and foment diſturbances in the Church. Who under religious appearances indulge their paſſions, and ſerve their intereſts, uſing a guiſe of devotion, and talk

talk about holy things as instruments to vent wrath, envy and spleen; to drive forward designs of ambition and avarice; who will not submit to any certain judgment or rule, will like nothing but what their fancy suggests, will acknowledge no law but their own will; who for no just cause, and upon any slender pretence withdraw themselves, and seduce others from the Church in which they were brought up, deserting its communion, impugning its laws, defaming its Governours, endeavouring to subvert its establishment: Who manage their discipline (such as it is of their own framing) unadvisedly and unsteadily, in no stable method, according to no setled rule, but as present conceit, or humour, or advantage prompteth; so that not being fixed in any certain judgment or practice, they soon clash with themselves, and divide from one another; incessantly roving from one Sect to another; *being carried about with divers and strange Doctrines; like Children tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine.*

Heb. 13. 9. Eph. 4. 14.

Those, the fruits of whose doctrine and managery amount at best onely to empty *form of godliness, void of real vertue*; while in truth they fill the minds of Men with ill-passions, ill-surmises, ill-will; they produce impious, unjust and uncharitable dealing of all kinds, particularly discontentful murmurings, disobedience to Magistrates; schisms and factions in the Church; combustions and seditions in the State.

2 Tim. 3. 13. In fine those, who in their temper and their deportment resemble those ancient seducers, branded in the Scripture, those *evil Men, who did seduce, and were seduced:*

Tit. 1. 10. Whose dispositions are represented in these *Epithets*: They were ἀνυπότακτοι, *unruly*, or persons indisposed and unwilling to submit to Government; 2 Pet. 2. 10. τολμηταὶ, αὐθάδεις, *presumptuous and self-willed*, or self-pleasing darers γογγυσταὶ, μεμψίμοιροι, *murmurers, complainers*, or conjunctly discontented mutiners, Tit. 3. 10, 11. αὐτοκατάκριτοι, *self-condemned*, namely, by contradictious shuffling and shifting, or by excommunicating themselves from the Church; 2 Tim. 3. 13, 14. γόητες, *bewitchers*, inveagling and deluding credulous people by dissimulation, and specious appearances; *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; being wolves in sheeps cloathing, grievous wolves not sparing the flock; deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the servants of Christ, and Ministers of righteousness; lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, revilers, truce-breakers, false-accusers, traytours, heady, high-minded, vain talkers, deceivers, ignorant, unlearned, unstable:*

Matt. 7. 15. Act. 20. 29. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 15. 1 Tim. 6. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 16.

Whose practices were; *To cause divisions and offences contrary to received Doctrine: By good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple; ---To swerve from charity---having turned aside to vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. To beguile unstable Souls; To lie in wait to deceive; To speak perverse things that they may draw Disciples after them; to creep into Houses captivating silly Women; To doat about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings; To speak swelling words of vanity; To admire persons because of advantage* (or out of private design, for self-interest;) *To subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucres sake; to speak lies in hypocrisie; To preach Christ out of envy and strife, not out of good-will, or pure intention* (οὐχ ἁγνῶς, *not purely*; *To promise liberty* to their followers; *To walk disorderly* (that is, in repugnance to order setled in the Church;) *To despise dominion, and without fear to reproach dignities; To speak evil* (rashly) *of those things which they know not* (which are beside their skill and cognizance) *To separate themselves*, from the Church.

Rom. 16. 17, 18. (1 Tim. 1. 6, 7.) Eph. 4. 14. Act. 20. 30. 2 Tim. 3. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 4. 2 Pet. 2. 18. Jud. 16. Tit. 1. 11. 1 Tim. 4. 2. Phil. 1. 16, 17. 2 Pet. 2. 19. 2 Thess. 3. 6, 11. 2 Pet. 2. 10. Jude 8. 16. 9. 2 John 9.

Such

Such Persons as these, arrogating to themselves the Office of Guides, and pretending to lead us, we must not follow or regard, but are in reason and conscience obliged to reject and shun them, as the Ministers of *Satan*, the Pests of *Christendom*, the Enemies and Murtherers of Souls. Tit. 3. 10. 2 Thess. 3. 6. Rom. 16. 16. 1 Tim. 6. 5.

It can indeed no-wise be safe to follow any such Leaders (whatever Pretences to special Illumination they hold forth, whatever specious guises of Sanctity they bear) who in their Doctrine or Practice deflect from the great beaten Roads of holy Scripture, primitive Tradition, and Catholick Practice, roving in bye-paths suggested to them by their private Fancies and Humours, their Passions and Lusts, their Interests and Advantages: there have in all Ages such counterfeit Guides started up, having debauched some few heedless Persons, having erected some συναγωγὰς, or petty Combinations against the regularly setled Corporations; but never with any durable success or countenance of Divine Providence; but like prodigeous *Meteors*, having caused a little gazing, and some Disturbance, their Sects have soon been dissipated, and have quite vanished away: the Authors and Abettors of them being either buried in oblivion, or recorded with ignominy: like that *Theudas* in the Speech of *Gamaliel*; who *rose up boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of Men about* 400 *joyned themselves; who was slain, and all as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.* Jude 13. Acts 5. 36.

But let thus much suffice to have been spoken concerning the Persons to whom Obedience must be performed.

SERMON XXV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

I Proceed to the Duty it self, the Obedience prescribed, which may (according to the extent in signification of the Word πείθεσθαι) be conceived to relate either to the Government, or to the Doctrine, or to the Conversation of the Persons specified; implying that we should obey their Laws, that we should embrace their Doctrine, that we should conform to their Practice, according to proper Limitations of such Performance, respectively:

We begin with the first, as seeming chiefly intended by the Words:

Obedience to Ecclesiastical Government; what this doth import we may understand by considering the Terms, whereby it is expressed, and those whereby its Correlate (spiritual Government) is signified; by Examples and Practice relating to it, by the Nature and Reason of the Matter it self.

Beside

Beſide the Word πείθεσθαι (which is commonly uſed to ſignifie all ſorts of Obedience, chiefly that which is due to Governours) here is added a Word ſerving to explain that, the word ἐνδείκεσθαι, which ſignifieth to yield, give way, or comply; relating (as it ſeemeth by its being put indefinitely) to all their proceedings in matters concerning their charge. In other places, parallel to our *Text*, it is expreſſed by ὑποτάσσεσθαι, the ſame Term, by which conſtantly the Subjection due to ſecular Powers (in all the Precepts enjoyning it) is expreſſed: Ὁμοίως νεώτεροι ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις, *In like manner* (or correſpondently ſaith St. *Peter*) *ye younger ſubmit your ſelves to the elder* (that is, as the Context ſhews, ye Inferiours in the Church obey your Superiours; ὁ νεώτερος both there and otherwhere doth ſignifie the ſtate of inferiority, as ὁ πρεσβύτερος importeth Dignity and Authority.) And ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς τοιούτοις, *ſubmit your ſelves unto ſuch, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*, ſaith St. *Paul*; and ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι, *Submitting your ſelves to one another in the fear of God*, that is, yielding conſcientiouſly that Submiſſion, which eſtabliſhed Order requireth from one to another: whence we may collect, that the Duty conſiſteth in yielding ſubmiſſion and compliance to all Laws, Rules and Orders enacted by Spiritual Governours for the due celebration of God's Worſhip, the promoting Edification, the conſerving Decency, the maintenance of Peace; as alſo to the Judgments and Cenſures in order to the ſame Purpoſes adminiſtred by them.

(Tit. 3. 1. Rom. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13.)

1 Pet. 5. 5.

Luke 22. 26.

1 Cor. 16. 16. Eph. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

This Obedience to be due to them may likewiſe be inferred from the various Names and Titles attributed to them; ſuch as thoſe of *Prelates*, *Superintendents*, *Paſtours*, *Supraviſours*, *Governours* and *Leaders*; which Terms, (more largely touched before) do imply Command and Authority of all ſorts, *Legiſlative*, *Judicial*, and *Executive*.

Such Obedience alſo Primitive Practice doth aſſert to them: for what Authority the holy *Apoſtles* did aſſume and exerciſe, the ſame we may reaſonably ſuppoſe derived to them; the ſame in Kind, although not in peculiarity of manner (by immediate Commiſſion from *Chriſt*, with ſupply of extraordinary Gifts and Graces) and in unlimitedneſs of extent: for they do ſucceed to the Apoſtles in charge and care over the Church, each in his Precinct (the Apoſtolical Office being diſtributed among them all.) The ſame Titles which the Apoſtles aſſumed to themſelves, they aſcribe to their *Sympresbyters*, requiring the ſame Duties from them, and preſcribing Obedience to them in the ſame Terms; They claimed no more Power than was needful to further Edification, and this is requiſite that preſent Governours alſo ſhould have; their Practice in Government may alſo well be preſumed exemplary to all future Governours: As then we ſee them διατάσσειν, *to order* things, and frame Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, διορθῶν, *to rectifie* things, or reform *defects*, to *impoſe* Obſervances *neceſſary* or expedient to the time; to judge Cauſes and Perſons, *being ready to avenge* or puniſh *every diſobedience*; to *uſe ſeverity* upon occaſions; with the ſpiritual *Rod* to chaſtiſe ſcandalous Offenders, *diſorderly walkers*, Perſons contumacious and unconformable to their Injunctions; to reject Hereticks, and baniſh notorious Sinners from Communion, warning the Faithful to forbear converſation with them: As they did challenge to themſelves *an authority from Chriſt* to exerciſe theſe and the like Acts of ſpiritual Dominion and Juriſdiction, exacting punctual Obedience to them; as we alſo ſee the like Acts exerciſed by Biſhops, whom they did conſtitute to feed and rule the Church; ſo we may reaſonably conceive all Governours

Cujus in ſolidum ſinguli participes ſumus. Vid. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl.*

2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.
To ordain Elders.
To confirm Proſelytes.
To exerciſe Juriſdiction.

1 Cor. 11. 34. Tit. 1. 5. Acts 15. 28. 1 Cor. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 10. 6. 2 Cor. 13. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 21. 12. 21. 13. 2. 2 Theſſ. 3. 6, 14. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Rom. 16. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.

Epiſcopi ſucceſſores Apoſtolorum. Cypr. *Ep.* 27. *& Ep.* 69, *&c. Ep.* 41. *& Ep.* 75. (Firmil.)

of

of the Church (the Heirs of their Office) inveſted with like Authority in order to the ſame purpoſes, and that correſpondent Obedience is due to them; ſo that what blame, what puniſhment was due to thoſe, who diſobeyed the Apoſtles, doth in proportion belong to the tranſgreſſors of their Duty toward the preſent Governours of the Church; eſpecially conſidering that our Lord promiſed his perpetual preſence and aſſiſtance to the Apoſtles. Matt. 28. 20.

We may farther obſerve, that accordingly in continual ſucceſſion from the firſt Ages, the good primitive *Biſhops* (the great Patrons and Propagatours of our Religion) did generally aſſume ſuch Power, and the People readily did yield Obedience; wherein that one did wrongfully uſurp, the other did weakly comply, were neither probable, nor juſt to ſuppoſe; whence general Tradition doth alſo confirm our obligation to this Duty.

That this kind of obedience is required doth alſo farther appear from conſidering the reaſon of Things, the condition of the Church, the deſign of Chriſtian Religion.

1. Every Chriſtian Church is a Society; no Society can abide in any comely order, any ſteady quiet, any deſirable proſperity without Government; no Government can ſtand without correſpondent obligation to ſubmit thereto.

2. Again, The ſtate of Religion under the Goſpel is the Kingdom of Heaven; *Chriſt* our Lord is King of the Church; it he viſibly governeth and ordereth by the ſpiritual Governours as his Subſtitutes and Lieutenants (whence they peculiarly are ſtyled his *Miniſters*, his *Officers*, his *Stewards*, his *Legates*, his *Co-workers.*) When he aſcending up to Gods Right-hand was inveſted with entire poſſeſſion of that Royal State, he ſetled them to adminiſter Affairs concerning that Government in his Place and Name; *Aſcending up on high he gave gifts unto men —— He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtours and Teachers*; He gave them, that is, he appointed them in their Office, ſubordinate to himſelf, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt*; As to him therefore ruling by them, by them enacting Laws, diſpenſing Juſtice, maintaining Order and Peace, Obedience is due. Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12.

3 Again, For the honour of God, the commendation of Religion, and benefit of the People, it is needful, that in all religious Performances, things ſhould, according to St. *Paul's* rule, be performed *decently, and according to order*, without unhandſom Confuſion, and troubleſom Diſtraction; this cannot be accompliſhed without a Determination of Perſons, of Modes, of Circumſtances appertaining to thoſe Performances) for how can any thing be performed decently, if every Perſon hath not his Rank and Station, his Office and Work allotted to him; if to every thing to be done, its time, its place, its manner of performance be not aſſigned, ſo that each one may know what, when, where, and how he muſt do?) ſuch determination muſt be committed to the diſcretion and care of ſome Perſons, impowered to frame ſtanding Laws or Rules concerning it, and to ſee them duly executed (for all Perſons without delay, ſtrife, confuſion, and diſturbance cannot meddle in it) with theſe Perſons all the reſt of the Body muſt be obliged to comply; otherwiſe all ſuch Determinations will be vain and ineffectual. Such Order Reaſon doth recommend in every Proceeding; ſuch Order eſpecially becometh the grandeur and importance of Sacred things; ſuch Order God hath declared himſelf to approve, and love, eſpecially in his own Houſe, among his People, in matters relating to his (1 Cor. 14. 23. Tit. 2. 10.) 1 Cor. 14. 40. 1 Cor. 14. 33.

Service; for *He is not* (as St. *Paul* ſaith, arguing to this purpoſe) *the God of confuſion, but of peace, in all Churches of the Saints.*

4. Again, It is requiſite that all Chriſtian Brethren ſhould conſpire in ſerving God with mutual Charity, hearty Concord, harmonious Conſent; that (as the Apoſtles ſo often preſcribed) they *ſhould endeavour to keep unity of ſpirit in the bond of peace:* That they ſhould *be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind, ſtanding faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind; That they ſhould walk by the ſame rule, and mind the ſame thing; That with one mind, and one mouth they ſhould glorifie God, the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; That they ſhould all ſpeak the ſame thing; and that there be no diviſions among them, but that they be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment;* (like thoſe in the *Acts*, of whom it is ſaid, *The multitude of believers had one heart, and oue ſoul*) *That there ſhould be no ſchiſms* (Diviſions, or Factions) *in the body*; that all Diſſenſions, all *murmurings*, all Emulations ſhould be diſcarded from the Church: the which Precepts, ſecluding an obligation to Obedience, would be impoſſible, and vain; for (without continual Miracle, and transforming Humane Nature, things not to be expected from God, who apparently deſigneth to manage Religion by ordinary ways of Humane Prudence, his gracious Aſſiſtance concurring) no durable Concord in any Society can ever effectually be maintained otherwiſe than by one publick Reaſon, Will and Sentence, which may repreſent, connect, and comprize all; in defect of that every one will be of a ſeveral Opinion about what is beſt, each will be earneſt for the prevalence of his Model and Way; there will be ſo many Law-givers as Perſons, ſo many Differences as Matters incident; nothing will paſs ſmoothly and quietly, without bickering and jangling; and conſequently without Animoſities and Feuds; whence no Unanimity, no Concord, ſcarce any Charity or Good-will can ſubſiſt.

Σύμψυχοι. Phil. 2. 2. Ὁμόφρονες. 1 Pet. 3. 8. Eph. 4. 3. Phil. 2. 2. 1. 27. Phil. 3. 16. Rom. 15. 5, 6. 12. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 10. Acts 4. 32. 1 Cor. 12. 25. 11. 18. 11. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Phil. 2. 14.

5. Farther, in conſequence of theſe things common Edification requireth ſuch Obedience: It is the duty of Governours to order all things to this end, that is, to the maintenance, encouragement, and improvement of Piety; for this purpoſe their Authority was given them, (as St. *Paul* ſaith) and therefore it muſt be deemed thereto conducible; it is indeed very neceſſary to Edification, which without Diſcipline guiding the ſimple and ignorant, reclaiming the erroneous and preſumptuous, cheriſhing the regular, and correcting the refractary, can no-wiſe be promoted.

2 Cor. 13. 10. 10. 8.

Excluding it, there can be no means of checking or redreſſing Scandals, which to the reproach of Religion, to the diſgrace of the Church, to the corrupting the Minds, and infecting the Manners of Men will ſpring up, and ſpread. Neither can there be any way to prevent the riſe and growth of pernicious Errours or Hereſies; the which aſſuredly in a ſtate of unreſtrained Liberty the wanton and wicked Minds of Men will breed, their licentious Practice will foſter, and propagate; to *the encreaſe of all impiety*; *their mouths muſt be ſtopped*, otherwiſe *they will ſubvert whole houſes, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre ſake*; *the word* of naughty Seducers *will ſpread like a gangrene*, if there be no corroſive or corrective Remedy to ſtay its progreſs.

1 Tim. 1. 19. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17, 18. 2 Tim. 2. 16. Tit. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

Where things are not managed in a ſtable, quiet, orderly way, no good Practice can flouriſh or thrive; Diſſention will choak all good Affections, Confuſion will obſtruct all good Proceedings; from Anarchy Emulation and Strife will certainly grow, and from them all ſorts of Wickedneſs; for *where* (ſaith St. *James*) there is *emulation and ſtrife, there is confuſion, and every evil thing.*

Jam. 3. 16.

All

All those Benefits, which arise from holy Communion in Offices of Piety and Charity (from common Prayers and Praises to God, from participation in all sacred Ordinances, from mutual Advice, Admonition, Encouragement, Consolation, good Example) will together vanish with Discipline; these depend upon the friendly union and correspondence of the Members; and no such Union can abide without the Ligament of Discipline, no such Correspondence can be upheld without unanimous compliance to publick Order. The Cement of Discipline wanting, the Church will not be like a *spiritual house*, compacted of *lively stones* into one goodly Pile; but like a company of scattered Pebbles, or a heap of Rubbish. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

So considering the reason of things, this Obedience will appear needful; to enforce the practice thereof we may adjoin several weighty Considerations.

Consider Obedience what it is, whence it springs, what it produceth, each of those respects will engage us to it.

It is in it self a thing very good and acceptable to God, very just and equal, very wise, very comely and pleasant.

It cannot but be grateful unto God, who is the God of love, of order, of peace, and therefore cannot but like the means furthering them; he cannot but be pleased to see Men do their Duty, especially that which regardeth his own Ministers; in the respect performed to whom he is himself indeed avowed, and honoured, and obeyed.

Tempus est, —ut de submissione provocent in se Dei clementiam, & de honore debito in Dei sacerdotem eliciant in se divinam misericordiam. Cypr. *Ep.* 30.

It is a just and equal thing, that every Member of Society should submit to the Laws and Orders of it; for every Man is supposed upon those Terms to enter into, and to abide in it; every Man is deemed to owe such Obedience in answer to his enjoyment of Privileges, and partaking of Advantages thereby; so therefore whoever pretendeth a Title to those excellent Immunities, Benefits and Comforts, which communion with the Church affordeth, it is most equal, that he should contribute to its support and welfare, its honour, its peace; that consequently he should yield Obedience to the Orders appointed for those ends. Peculiarly equal it is in regard to our Spiritual Governours, who are obliged to be very solicitous and laborious in furthering our best good; who stand deeply engaged, and are responsible for the welfare of our Souls: they must be contented to *spend, and be spent*, to undergo any Pains, any Hardships, any Dangers and Crosses occurring in pursuance of those Designs: and is it not then plainly equal (is it not indeed more than equal, doth not all Ingenuity and Gratitude require?) that we should encourage, and comfort them in bearing those Burthens, and in discharging those Incumbrances by a fair and chearful Compliance? 'tis the *Apostle*'s enforcement of the Duty in our Text: *Obey them* (saith he) *and submit your selves; for they watch for your souls, as those, who are to render an accompt, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief* (or groaning.)

Is it not indeed extreme iniquity and ingratitude, when they with anxious care, and earnest toil are endeavouring our Happiness, that we should vex and trouble them by our perverse and cross Behaviour?

Nay, is it not palpable Folly to do thus, seeing thereby we do indispose and hinder them from effectually discharging their Duty to our Advantage? ἀλυσιτελὲς γὰρ ὑμῖν τοῦτο, *for this* (addeth the *Apostle*, farther pressing the Duty) *is unprofitable to you*, or it tendeth to your Disadvantage and Damage; not only as involving guilt, but as inferring loss; the loss of all those spiritual Benefits, which Ministers being encouraged, and thence performing their Office with alacrity and sprightful diligence would

procure to you: it is therefore our Wiſdom to be obedient, becauſe Obedience is ſo advantageous and profitable to us.

The ſame is alſo a comely and amiable thing, yielding much Grace, procuring great Honour to the Church, highly adorning and crediting Religion: It is a goodly ſight to behold things proceeding orderly; to ſee every Perſon quietly reſting in his Poſt, or moving evenly in his Rank; to obſerve Superiours calmly leading, Inferiours gladly following, and Equals lovingly accompanying each other: this is the *Pſalmiſt's Ecce quam bonum! Behold, how* (admirably) *good, and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* ſuch a ſtate of things argueth the good Temper and Wiſdom of Perſons ſo demeaning themſelves, the excellency of the Principles, which do guide and act them, the goodneſs of the Conſtitution which they obſerve; ſo it crediteth the Church, and graceth Religion; a thing which (as St. *Paul* teacheth) *in all things* we ſhould endeavour.

Pſal. 139. 1.

Tit. 2. 10. 5.

It is alſo a very pleaſant and comfortable thing to live in Obedience; by it we enjoy tranquility of Mind, and ſatisfaction of Conſcience, we taſte all the ſweets of Amity and Peace, we are freed from the ſtings of inward Remorſe, we eſcape the grievances of Diſcord and Strife.

The Cauſes alſo and Principles, from which Obedience ſpringeth, do much commend it: it ariſeth from the Diſpoſitions of Soul, which are moſt Chriſtian and moſt Humane; from Charity, Humility, Meekneſs, Sobriety of Mind, and calmneſs of Paſſion; the which always diſpoſe Men to ſubmiſs, complaiſant, peaceable Demeanour toward all Men, eſpecially toward thoſe, whoſe Relation to them claimeth ſuch Demeanour; theſe a genuine, free, cordial and conſtant Obedience do ſignifie to live in the Soul; together with a general honeſty of Intention, and exemption from baſe Deſigns.

In fine, innumerable and ineſtimable are the Benefits and good Fruits accruing from this Practice; Beſide the Support it manifeſtly yieldeth to the Church, the gracefulneſs of Order, the conveniences and pleaſures of Peace, it hath alſo a notable influence upon the common Manners of Men, which hardly can ever prove very bad, where the Governours of the Church do retain their due Reſpect and Authority; nothing more powerfully doth inſtigate to Vertue, than the countenance of Authority, nothing more effectually can reſtrain from exorbitancy of Vice, than the Bridle of Diſcipline: this obvious Experience demonſtrateth, and we ſhall plainly ſee, if we reflect upon thoſe times when Piety and Vertue have moſt flouriſhed: whence was it, that in thoſe good old Times Chriſtians did ſo abound in good Works, that they burnt with holy Zeal, that they gladly would do, would ſuffer any thing for their Religion? whence but from a mighty reſpect to their Superiours; from a ſtrict regard to their Direction and Diſcipline? Did the *Biſhops* then preſcribe long Faſts, or impoſe rigid Penances? willingly did the People undergo them; Did the *Paſtour* conduct into Danger, did he lead them into the very Jaws of Death, and Martyrdom? the Flock with a reſolute alacrity did follow; did a *Prelate* interdict any Practice ſcandalous, or prejudicial to the Church; under pain of incurring Cenſure? Every Man trembled at the conſequences of tranſgreſſing: No terrour of worldly Power, no ſeverity of Juſtice, no dread of corporal Puniſhment had ſuch efficacy to deter Men from ill-doing, as the Reproof and Cenſure of a Biſhop; his Frown could avail more than the Menaces of an Emperour, than the Rage of a Per-

Neque hoc ità dixerim, ut negligatur Eccleſiaſtica diſciplina, & permittatur quiſquam facere quod velit ſine ulla correptione. & quadam medicinali vindicta, & terribili lenitate, & charitatis ſeveritate. Aug. *adv.* Petil. 3. 4.

Perſecutour, than the Rods and Axes of an Executioner: No Rod indeed did ſmart like the ſpiritual Rod, no Sword did cut ſo deep as that of the Spirit; no Loſs was then ſo valuable, as being deprived of ſpiritual Advantages; no Baniſhment was ſo grievous as being ſeparated from Holy Communion; no Sentence of Death was ſo terrible, as that which cut Men off from the Church: No Thunder could aſtoniſh or affright Men like the crack of a ſpiritual *Anathema:* This was that which kept Vertue in requeſt, and Vice in deteſtation; hence it was that Men were ſo good, that Religion did ſo thrive, that ſo frequent, and ſo illuſtrious Examples of Piety did appear: Hence indeed we may well reckon that Chriſtianity did (under ſo many Diſadvantages and Oppoſitions) ſubſiſt, and grow up; Obedience to Governours was its guard; that kept the Church firmly united in a Body ſufficiently ſtrong to maintain it ſelf againſt all aſſaults of Faction within, of Oppoſition from abroad; that preſerved that Concord, which diſpoſed and enabled Chriſtians to defend their Religion againſt all Fraud and Violence: that cheriſhed the true Vertue, and the beautiful Order, which begot veneration to Religion; to it therefore we owe the life and growth of Chriſtianity, ſo that through many ſharp Perſecutions it hath held up its Head; through ſo many perillous Diſeaſes it hath kept its Life until this Day. There were not then of old any ſuch Cavils and Clamours againſt every thing preſcribed by Governours; there were no ſuch unconſcionable Scruples, no ſuch hard-hearted Pretences to tender Conſcience deviſed to baffle the Authority of Superiours; had there been ſuch, had Men then commonly been ſo froward and factious as now, the Church had been ſoon ſhivered into pieces, our Religion had been ſwallowed up in Confuſion and Licentiouſneſs.

If again we on the other hand fix our Conſideration upon Diſobedience, (the Nature, the Sources, the Conſequences thereof) it will, I ſuppoſe, much conduce to the ſame effect, of perſuading us to the practice of this Duty:

It is in it ſelf a heinous Sin, being the tranſgreſſion of a Command in nature and conſequence very important, upon which God layeth great ſtreſs, which is frequently inculcated in Scripture, which is fenced by divers other Precepts, which is preſſed by ſtrong Arguments, and backed by ſevere threatnings of Puniſhment upon the Tranſgreſſours.

It is in its nature a kind of apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity, and rebellion againſt our Lord; for as he that refuſeth to obey the King's Magiſtrates in adminiſtration of their Office is interpreted to diſclaim his Authority, and to deſign Rebellion againſt him; ſo they who obſtinately diſobey the Miniſters of our Lord's ſpiritual Kingdom, do thereby appear to diſavow him, to ſhake off his Yoke, to impeach his Reign over them; ſo doth he himſelf interpret and take it: *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that heareth you, heareth me, and he that* (ὁ ἀθετῶν, *that baffleth*) *deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*; and, *If any man neglect to hear the Church* (or ſhall diſobey it, ἐὰν παρακούσῃ) *let him be to thee as a heathen, and a publican*; that is, ſuch a refractary Perſon doth by his Contumacy put himſelf into the ſtate of one removed from *the Commonwealth of Iſrael*, he forfeiteth the ſpecial protection of God, he becometh as an Alien, or an Outlaw from the Kingdom of our Lord. Luke 10. 16. Matt. 10. 40. 12. 17.

Nec putent ſibi vitæ aut ſalutis conſtare rationem, ſi Epiſcopis & Sacerdotibus obtemperare noluerint; cùm in Deutron. Deus dicat, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 61.

Under the *Moſaical* Diſpenſation thoſe *who would do preſumptuouſly, and would not hearken unto the Prieſt, that ſtood to miniſter before the Lord*, did incur capital Puniſhment; thoſe who factiouſly murmured againſt *Aaron*, are ſaid to make an Inſurrection againſt God, and anſwerably were puniſhed Deut. 17. 12.

Num. 16. 11. 30. niſhed in a miraculous way (*The Lord made a new thing, the earth opened, and ſwallowed them up; they went down alive into the pit.*) It was in the Hoſ. 4. 4. Prophetical times an expreſſion ſignifying height of impiety; *My People is as thoſe who ſtrive with the Prieſt:* Seeing then God hath no leſs regard to his peculiar Servants now than he had then; ſeeing they no leſs repreſent him, and act by his Authority now, than any did then; ſeeing their Service is as precious to him, and as much tendeth to his Honour now, as the *Levitical* Service then did; ſeeing he no leſs loveth Order and Peace in the *Church*, than he did in the *Synagogue*, we may well ſuppoſe it a no leſs heinous Sin, and odious to God, to deſpiſe the Miniſters of *Chriſt*'s Goſpel, than it was before to deſpiſe the Miniſters of *Moſes* his Law.

Quo exemplo oſtenditur, & probatur obnoxios omnes & culpæ & pœnæ futuros, qui ſe ſchiſmaticis contra præpoſitos & ſacerdotes irreligioſâ temeritate miſcuerint. Cypr. *Ep.* 76.

It is a Sin indeed, pregnant with divers Sins, and involving the breach of many great Commands, which are frequently propoſed and preſſed in 1 Cor. 16. 14. the *New Teſtament*, with deſign in great part to guard and ſecure it; *That* Phil. 2. 14. *of doing all things in charity*, or *doing all things without murmurings, and diſ-* Rom. 12. 18. *ſentions, of purſuing peace ſo far as lieth in us*, of maintaining unity, con- 2 Tim. 2. 22. cord, unanimity in Devotion, of avoiding Schiſms, and Diſſentions, and Heb. 12. 14. Mark 9. 10. the like; which are all notoriouſly violated by this Diſobedience; it includeth the moſt high breach of Charity, the moſt formal infringing Peace, the moſt ſcandalous kind of Diſcord that can be, to croſs our Superiours.

An eſſe ſibi cum Chriſto videtur, qui adverſus ſacerdotes Chriſti facit? &c. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl. p.* 258.

It is alſo a practice iſſuing from the worſt Diſpoſitions of ſoul, ſuch as are moſt oppoſite to the Spirit of our Religion, and indeed very repugnant to common Reaſon, and Humanity; from a proud Haughtineſs, or vain wantonneſs of Mind, from the irregularity of unmortified and unbridled Paſſion, from exorbitant Selfiſhneſs (Selfiſhneſs of every bad kind, Self-conceit, Self-will, Self-intereſt) from turbulent Animoſity, froward croſſneſs of Humour, rancorous Spite, perverſe Obſtinacy; from Envy, Ambition, Avarice, and the like ill Sources, the worſt fruits of the Fleſh and corrupt Nature; to ſuch Diſpoſitions the rejecting God's *Prophets* of old, and the non-compliance with the *Apoſtles* are aſcribed in *Scripture*; and from the ſame the like neglect of God's Meſſengers now do proceed; as whoever will obſerve may eaſily diſcern; do but mind the Diſcourſes of factious People, you ſhall perceive them all to breathe generally nothing but Ill-nature.

The Fruits alſo, which it produceth, are extremely bad; manifold great Inconveniencies and Miſchiefs, hugely prejudicing the intereſt of Religion, and the welfare of the Church.

Vide Cypr. *Ep.* 55 *Neque enim aliunde, &c.* It is immediately and formally a violation of Order and Peace; whence all the woful Conſequences of Diſorder and Faction do adhere thereto.

Inde Schiſmata, & Hæreſes obortæ ſunt, & oriuntur, dum Epiſcopus, qui unus eſt, & Eccleſiæ præeſt ſuperbâ quorundam præſumptione contemnitur. Cypr. *Ep.* 69.

Hæc ſunt initia Hæreticorum, & ortus atque conatus Schiſmaticorum malè cogitantium ut ſibi placeant, ut præpoſitum ſuperbo tumore contemnant. Sic de Eccleſia receditur, ſic altare profanum foris collocatur, ſic contra pacem Chriſti, atque unitatem Dei rebellatur. Cypr. *Ep.* 65.

It breedeth great Diſgrace to the Church, and Scandal to Religion; for what can appear more ugly than to ſee among the Profeſſors of Religion, Children oppoſing their Fathers, Scholars conteſting with their Maſters, Inferiours ſlighting and croſſing their Superiours? what can more expoſe the Church and Religion to the contempt, to the deriſion of *Atheiſts* and *Infidels*, of profane and lewd Perſons, of wild *Hereticks* and *Schiſmaticks*, of all Enemies unto Truth and Piety, than ſuch foul irregularity.

It

It corrupteth the Minds and Manners of Men; for when that Diſcipline is relaxed, which was ordained to guard Truth, and promote Holineſs; when Men are grown ſo licentious and ſtubborn, as to contemn their Superiours, to diſregard their wholſom Laws and ſober Advice, there can be no curb to reſtrain them; but down precipitantly they run into all kind of vicious Irregularities and Exceſſes; when thoſe Mounds are taken away, whither will Men ramble; when thoſe Banks are broken down, what can we expect but Deluges of impious Doctrine, and wicked Practice to overflow the ignorant and inconſiderate People?

Eccleſiæ gloria præpoſiti gloria eſt. Cypr. *Ep.* 7. *Ep.* 55.

Doth not indeed this Practice evidently tend to the diſſolution of the Church, and deſtruction of Chriſtianity? for when the *Shepherds* are (as to conduct and efficacy) *taken away*, will *not the ſheep be ſcattered*, or *wander aſtray*, *like ſheep without a ſhepherd*, being bewildred in various Errors, and expoſed as a Prey to any wild Beaſts; to the *grievous wolves*, to the *ravenous lions*, to the wily Foxes? here a fanatical Enthuſiaſt will ſnap them, there a profane Libertine will worry them, there again a deſperate Atheiſt will tear and devour them.

Matt. 26. 31.

Τοῦτο πάντων τῶν κακῶν αἴτιον, ὅτι τὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων ὑφανίδην, ἀδεμία αἰδοῖ, ἀδεεῖς φόβου, &c. Chryſ. *in* 2 Tim. *Or.* 2.

Conſult we but obvious Experience, and we ſhall ſee, what ſpoils and mines of Faith, of good Conſcience, of common Honeſty and Sobriety this practice hath in a few years cauſed: how have *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity*, how have Profaneneſs and Diſſoluteneſs of Manners, how have all kinds of Diſhoneſty and Baſeneſs grown up ſince Men began to diſregard the Authority of their ſpiritual Guides? what diſmal Tragedies have we in our Age beheld acted upon this Stage of our own Country; what bloody Wars and Murthers (Murthers of *Princes*, of *Nobles*, of *Biſhops* and *Prieſts*) what miſerable Oppreſſions, Extortions and Rapines; what execrable Seditions and Rebellions; what barbarous Animoſities and Feuds; what abominable Treaſons, Sacrileges, Perjuries, Blaſphemies; what horrible violations of all Juſtice and Honeſty? and what I pray was the Source of theſe things? where did they begin? where but at murmuring againſt, at rejecting, at perſecuting the ſpiritual Governours, at caſting down and trampling on their Authority; at ſlighting and ſpurning at their Advice; ſurely would Men have obſerved the Laws, or have hearkned to the Counſels of thoſe grave and ſober Perſons, whom God had appointed to direct them, they never would have run into the commiſſion of ſuch Enormities.

It is not to be omitted, that in the preſent ſtate of things the guilt of Diſobedience to ſpiritual Governours is encreaſed and aggravated by the ſupervenient guilt of another Diſobedience to the Laws of our Prince and Country; Before the ſecular Powers (unto whom God hath committed the diſpenſation of Juſtice, with the maintenance of Peace and Order in reference to worldly Affairs) did ſubmit to our Lord, and became *nurſing parents of the Church*, the power of managing Eccleſiaſtical matters did wholly reſide in ſpiritual Guides; unto whom Chriſtians, as the *peculiar* Subjects of God, were obliged willingly to yield Obedience; and refuſing it, were guilty before God of ſpiritual Diſorder, Faction, or Schiſm; but now after that political Authority (out of pious Zeal for God's Service, out of a wiſe care to prevent the influences of Diſorder in ſpiritual Matters upon the temporal Peace, out of grateful return for the Advantages the Commonwealth enjoyeth from Religion, and the Church) hath pleaſed to back and fortifie the Laws of ſpiritual Governours by civil Sanctions, the Knot of our Obligation is tied faſter, its force is redoubled, we by Diſobedience incur a double guilt, and offend God two ways, both as Supreme Governour of the World, and as King of the Church;

to

to our Schism against the Church we add Rebellion against our Prince, and so become no less bad Citizens than bad Christians; Some may perhaps imagine their Disobedience hence more excusable, taking themselves now only thereby to transgress a political Sanction; but (beside that even that were a great Offence, the Command of our temporal Governours being sufficient, out of conscience to Gods express Will, to oblige us in all things not evidently repugnant to God's Law) it is a great Mistake to think the Civil Law doth any-wise derogate from the Ecclesiastical; that doth not swallow this up, but succoureth and corroborateth it; their concurrence yieldeth an accession of weight and strength to each; they do not by conspiring to prescribe the same thing either of them cease to be Governours as to right; but in efficacy the Authority of both should thence be augmented; seeing the obligation to Obedience is multiplied upon their Subjects; and to disobey them is now two Crimes, which otherwise should be but one.

SERMON XXVI.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

SUCH is the Nature of this Duty, and such are the Reasons enforcing the practice thereof; I shall only farther remove two Impediments of that practice; and so leave this Point.

Μάλιστα γὰρ ἁπάντων χειμαρροῖς ἔοικε φερομένοις πρὸς βίαν ἐπανορθῶν τὰ ἡμαρτανόντων πλαίσματα, &c. Chrys. *de Sacerd.* 2.

Ἐνταῦθα δὲ βιαζόμενον, ἀλλὰ πείθοντα δεῖ ποιεῖν ἀμείνω τὸ τοιοῦτον. Ibid.

Matt. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 3.

1. One hindrance of Obedience is this, that spiritual Power is not despotical, or compulsory, but parental or pastoral; that it hath no external force to abett it, or to avenge Disobedience to its Laws; they must not κατεξουσιάζειν, or κατακυριεύειν, (be imperious, or domineer) they are not allowed to exercise violence, or to inflict bodily correction; but must rule in meek and gentle ways, directly influential upon the Mind and Conscience, (ways of rational persuasion, exhortation, admonition, reproof) *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;---convincing, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering, and doctrine:* their Word is their only Weapon, their force of argument all the constraint they apply; hence Men commonly do not stand in awe of them, nor are so sensible of their obligation to obey them; they cannot understand why they should be frighted by Words, or controlled by an unarmed Authority.

2 Tim. 2. 24. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 3. 3.

But this in truth (things being duly considered) is so far from diminishing our Obligation, or arguing the Authority of our Governours to be weak and precarious, that it rendreth our Obligation much greater, and their Authority more dreadful; for the sweeter and gentler their way of go-

governing is, the more diſingenuous and unworthy a thing it is to diſobey it; not to be perſuaded by reaſon, not to be allured by Kindneſs, not to admit friendly Advice, not to comply with the calmeſt Methods of furthering our own Good, is a brutiſh thing; he that only can be ſcared and ſcourged to Duty, ſcarce deſerveth the Name of a Man: it therefore doth the more oblige us, that in this way we are moved to Action by Love rather than fear: Yet if we would fear wiſely and juſtly, (not like Children, being frighted with formidable Shapes, and Appearances, but like Men apprehending the real Conſequences of things) we ſhould the more fear theſe ſpiritual Powers, becauſe they are inſenſible: For that God hath commanded us to obey them, without aſſigning viſible Forces to conſtrain or chaſtiſe, is a manifeſt Argument, that he hath reſerved the Vindication of their Authority to his own Hand, which therefore will be infallibly certain, and terribly ſevere; ſo the nature of the Caſe requireth, and ſo God hath declared it ſhall be; The Sentence that is upon Earth pronounced by his Miniſters upon contumacious Offenders, he hath declared himſelf ready to ratifie in Heaven, and therefore moſt aſſuredly will execute it: As under the old Law God appointed to the Tranſgreſſion of ſome Laws, upon which he laid ſpecial Streſs, the Puniſhment of being *cut off from his people*; the Execution of which Puniſhment he reſerved to himſelf, to be accompliſhed in his own way, and time; ſo doth he now in like manner take upon him to maintain the Cauſe of his Miniſters; and to execute the Judgments decreed by them; and if ſo, we may conſider that *it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*: Eccleſiaſtical Authority therefore is not a Shadow void of Subſtance or Force, but hath the greateſt power in the World to ſupport and aſſert it; it hath Arms to maintain it moſt effectual and forcible (thoſe of which St. *Paul* ſaith, *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God* ——) it inflicteth Chaſtiſements far more dreadful than any ſecular Power can inflict; for theſe only touch the Body, thoſe pierce the Soul; theſe concern only our temporal State, thoſe reach Eternity it ſelf; theſe at moſt yield a tranſitory Smart, or kill the Body, thoſe produce endleſs Torment; and (utterly as to all Comfort in being) deſtroy the Soul.

Mat. 18. 18.

Heb. 10. 31.

2 Cor. 10. 4.

The Puniſhment for extream contumacy is called *delivery to Satan*; and is not this far worſe than to be put into the Hands of any Gaoler or Hangman? What are any Chords of Hemp, or Fetters of Iron in compariſon to thoſe Bands, of which 'tis ſaid, *Whatever ye bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven*; which engage the Soul in a Guilt, never to be looſed, except by ſore Contrition, and ſerious Repentance? What are any Scourges to St. *Paul*'s Rod, laſhing the Heart and Conſcience with ſtinging Remorſe; What any Axes or Faulchions to that *ſword of the ſpirit*; which cutteth off a Member from the Body of Chriſt? What are any Faggots and Torches to that unquenchable *fire and brimſtone* of the infernal Lake? What, in fine, doth any Condemnation here ſignifie to that horrible Curſe, which devoteth an incorrigible Soul to the bottomleſs Pit?

Spirituali gladio ſuperbi & contumaces necantur, dum de Eccleſia ejiciuntur. Cypr. *Ep.* 61.

It is therefore indeed a great Advantage to this Power that it is ſpiritual.

2. Another grand Obſtruction to the practice of this Duty is, Pretence to ſcruple about the Lawfulneſs, or Diſſatisfaction in the Expedience of that, which our Governours preſcribe, that we are able to advance Objections againſt their Decrees, that we can eſpy Inconveniences enſuing upon their Orders; that we imagine the Conſtitution may be reformed, ſo as to become more pure, more convenient and comely, more ſerviceable to Edification; that we cannot fanſie that to be beſt, which they enjoy: For removing this Obſtruction let me only propound ſome Queſtions.

Cypr. *Ep.* 50. & 52. (p. 97)

Φιλοίνοις οἶνος ἀλείπτης, ἀδὲ φιλονείκοις μάχη. Socr. *hist.* 7. 31.

Were not any Government appointed in vain, if such pretences might exempt or excuse from Conformity to its Orders? can such ever be wanting? is there any thing devisable, which may not be impugned by some plausible Reason, which may not disgust a squeamish Humour? is there any Matter so clearly innocent, the Lawfulness whereof a weak Mind will not question, any thing so firm and solid, in which a small Acuteness of Wit cannot pick a Hole, any thing so indisputably certain, that whoever affecteth to cavil may not easily devise some Objections against it?

Is there any thing here that hath no Inconveniencies attending it? are not in all humane Things, Conveniencies and Inconveniencies so mixt and complicated, that it is impossible to disintangle and sever them? can there be any Constitution under Heaven so absolutely pure and perfect, that no Blemish or Defect shall appear therein? can any Providence of Man foresee, any Care prevent, any Industry remedy all Inconveniencies possible? Is a Reformation satisfactory to all Fancies any-wise practicable; and are they not fitter to live in a *Platonick Idea* of a Common-wealth, than in any real Society who press for such an one? to be facile and complaisant in other Cases, bearing with things which do not please us, is esteemed commendable, a courteous and humane Practice, why should it not be much more reasonable to condescend to our Superiours, and comport with their Practice? is it not very discourteous to deny them the Respect which we allow to others, or to refuse that Advantage to publick Transactions, which we think fit to grant unto private Conversation?

Οὐ δὲ μόνον ἡ ἀρίστην (πολιτείαν) δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ δυνατὴ Arist. *Pol.* 4. 1.

Si ubi jubeantur quærere singulis liceat; pereunte obsequio etiam imperium intercidit. Tac. 1. *p.* 450. Otho.

To what purpose did God institute a Government, if the Resolutions thereof must be suspended, till every Man is satisfied with them; or if its State must be altered so often as any Man can pick in it Matter of Offence or Dislike; or if the Proceedings thereof must be shaped according to the numberless Varieties of different and repugnant Fancies?

Are, I pray, the Objections against Obedience so clear, and cogent, as are the Commands which enjoin, and the Reasons which enforce it? are the Inconveniencies adhering to it apparently so grievous, as are the Mischiefs which spring from Disobedience? do they in a just Balance counterpoize the Disparagement of Authority, the Violation of Order, the Disturbance of Peace, the Obstruction of Edification, which Disobedience produceth?

Dixisti sanè scrupulum tibi esse tollendum de animo, in quem incidisti; Incidisti sed tua credulitate irreligiosâ, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 69. (*ad Florent.*) *vid. optimè & appositè de hâc re disserentem.*

Do the *Scruples* (or *Reasons*, if we will call them so) which we propound, amount to such a Strength and Evidence, as to out-weigh the Judgment of those whom God hath authorised by his Commission, whom he doth enable by his Grace to instruct and guide us? May not those, whose Office it is to judge of such things; whose Business it is to study for Skill in order to that purpose, who have most Experience in those Affairs, specially belonging to them, be reasonably deemed most able to judge both for themselves and us, what is lawful, and what expedient? have they not Eyes to see what we do, and Hearts to judge concerning the Force of our Pretences, as well as we?

Qui fidei & veritati præsumus. Cypr. *Ep.* 72.

Is it not a Design of their Office to resolve our Doubts, and void our Scruples in such Cases, that we may act securely and quietly, being directed by better Judgments than our own? Are they not strictly obliged in Conscience, are they not deeply engaged by Interest to govern us in the best manner? Is it therefore Wisdom, is it Modesty, is it Justice for us to advance our private Conceits against their most deliberate publick Resolutions? May we not in so doing mistake; may we not be blind, or weak

weak (not to ſay fond, or proud, or perverſe) and ſhall thoſe Defects or Defaults of ours evacuate ſo many Commands of God, and render his ſo noble, ſo needful an Ordinance quite inſignificant?

Do we eſpecially ſeem to be in earneſt, or appear otherwiſe than illuſively to palliate our naughty Affections, and ſiniſter Reſpects, when we ground the Juſtification of our Non-conformity upon dark Subtilties, and intricate Quirks; which it is hard to conceive that we underſtand our ſelves, and whereof very perſpicacious Men cannot apprehend the Force? Do we think we ſhall be innocent Men, becauſe we are ſmart Sophiſters; or that God will excuſe us from our Duty, becauſe we can perplex Men with our Diſcourſes? or that we are bound to do nothing, becauſe we are able to ſay ſomewhat againſt all things?

Would we not do well to conſider, what huge Danger they incur, and how maſſy a Load of Guilt they muſt undergo, upon whom ſhall be charged all thoſe ſad Diſorders, and horrid Miſchiefs which are naturally conſequent on Diſobedience; what if Confuſion of things, if Corruption of Manners; if Oppreſſion of Truth, if Diſſolution of the Church do thence enſue, what a Caſe then ſhall we be in, who confer ſo much thereto? Would not ſuch Conſiderations be apt to beget Scruples far more diſquieting an honeſt, and truly conſciencious Mind, than any ſuch either profound Subtilties, or ſuperficial Plauſibilities can do; which Diſſenters are wont to alledge? For needeth he not to have extream Reaſon (Reaſon extreamly ſtrong and evident) who dareth to refuſe that Obedience, which God ſo plainly commandeth, by which his own Authority is maintained, on which the Safety, Proſperity, and Peace of the Church dependeth, in which the Support of Religion, and the Welfare of numberleſs Souls is deeply concerned?

Did, let me farther ask, the *Apoſtles*, when they ſettled Orders in the Church, when they impoſed what they conceived needful for Edification, and Decency, when they inflicted ſpiritual Chaſtiſements upon diſorderly Walkers, regard ſuch Pretences? or had thoſe ſelf-conceited and ſelf-willed People (who *obeyed* not their *Words*, but *reſiſted* and rejected them) no ſuch Pretences? Had they nothing, think we, to ſay for themſelves? nothing to object againſt the Apoſtolick Orders, and Proceedings? they had ſurely; they failed not to find Faults in the Eſtabliſhment, and to pretend a kind of tender Conſcience for their Diſobedience; yet this hindred not, but that the Apoſtles condemned their Miſ-behaviour and inflicted ſevere Cenſures upon them?

2 Tim. 4. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Theſſ. 3. 14. 6.

Did not alſo the Primitive *Biſhops* (and all Spiritual Governours down from the Beginning every where almoſt to theſe Days of Contention and Diſorder) proceed in the ſame Courſe, not fearing to enact ſuch Laws concerning indifferent Matters, and Circumſtances of Religion, as ſeemed to them conducible to the good of the Church? Did not all good People readily comply with their Orders, how painful ſoever, or diſagreeable to Fleſh and Blood, without Conteſt or Scruple? yet had not they as much Wit, and no leſs Conſcience than our ſelves? They who had Wiſdom enough to deſcry the Truth of our Religion through all the Clouds of Obloquy and Diſgrace, which it lay under; who had Zeal and Conſtancy to bear the hardeſt Brunts of Perſecution againſt it; were they ſuch Fools as to ſee no Fault; ſo ſtupid as to reſent nothing, or ſo looſe as to comply with any thing? No ſurely; they were in truth ſo wiſe as to know their Duty, and ſo honeſt as to obſerve it.

If theſe Conſiderations will not ſatisfie, I have done; and proceed to the next Point of our Duty, to which the Precept in our Text may extend;

tend; concerning the Doctrine of our Guides: In which respect it may be conceived to imply the following Particulars, to be performed by us, as Instances, or Parts, or degrees thereof.

1. We should readily and gladly address our selves to hear them; not out of profane and wilful Contempt, or slothful Negligence declining to attend upon their Instructions: There were of old those, of whom the *Prophets* complain, who would not so much as hearken to the Words of those, whom God sent unto them; but stopped their Ears, *withdrew the shoulder, and hardened the neck, and would not hear*; there were those in the *Evangelical* times, who did ἀπωθεῖν τ λόγον, *thrust away the word of God, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life*; *who would not admit, or hear the word of Life*, and Overtures of Grace propounded by the *Apostles*; There were *Gadarenes*, who beseeched our Lord himself to depart from their Coasts; There have always been *deaf Adders, who stop their ears to the voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely*; No wonder then if now there be those, who will not so much as allow a Hearing to the Messengers of God, and the Guides of their Soul, some out of a factious Prejudice against their Office or their Persons, or their Way to shun them, giving themselves over to the Conduct of Seducers; some out of a profane Neglect of all Religion, out of being wholly possessed with worldly Cares, and Desires, out of Stupidity and Sloth (indisposing them to mind any thing that is serious) will not afford them any Regard: All these are extreamly blameable, offensive to God, and injurious to themselves: It is a heinous Affront to God (implying a hostile Disposition toward him, an Unwillingness to have any Correspondence with him) to refuse so much as Audience to his Ambassadors; It is an interpretative Repulsing him; so of old he expressed it; *I*, saith he, *spake unto you, rising early, and speaking, but ye heard not; I called you, but ye answered not*; so under the Gospel, *He*, saith our Lord, *that heareth you, heareth me*; and *he that despiseth* (or regardeth not) *you, despiseth me*; and, *We are Ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.* It is a starving our Souls, depriving them of that Food, which God hath provided for them; It is keeping our selves at distance from any Means or Possibility of being well informed and quickened to the Practice of our Duty, of being reclaimed from our Errours, and Sins; it is the way to become hardened in Impiety, or sinking into a reprobate Sense: This is the first Step to Obedience; for *how can we believe, except we hear*? this is that, which St. *James* urgeth; *Let every man be quick to hear*; and, which St. *Peter* thus enjoineth, *Like new-born Babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby*; We should especially be quick and ready to hear those, whom God hath authorized and appointed to speak; we should *desire to suck the milk of the word* from those, who are our spiritual Parents and Nurses.

Neh. 9. 29. Prov. 1. 24. Isa. 65. 12. 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. 6. 10. Acts 13. 46. Mat. 10. 14. Luke 8. 37. Psal. 58. 4, 5. Jer. 7. 13. Luke 10. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Jam. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

2. We should hear them with serious, earnest Attention, and Consideration; so that we may well understand, may be able to weigh, may retain in Memory, and may become duly affected with their Discourses; We must not hear them drowsily and slightly, as if we were nothing concerned, or were hearing an impertinent Tale; their Word should not pass through the Ears, and slip away without effect; but sink into the Understanding, into the Memory, into the Heart; like the *good seed* falling into *a depth of earth*, able to afford it Root and Nourishment; therefore we must attend diligently thereto: περισσοτέρως ἔν δεῖ προσέχειν, *we should therefore give more abundant heed*, as the Apostle saith, *to the things we hear, lest at any time we should let them slip.* This Duty the Na-

Mat. 13. 5. Heb. 2. 1.

Nature and Importance of their Word requireth: *It is the word, not of men*, but *in truth the word* of the great *God*, (his Word as proceeding from him, as declaring his Mind and Will, as tendring his Overtures of Grace and Mercy) which as such challengeth great Regard and Awe; it informeth us of our chief Duties, it furthereth our main Interests, it guideth us into, it urgeth us forward in the Way to eternal Happiness; 'tis the Word that is *able to save our souls*; to render *us wise unto salvation*; It therefore claimeth and deserveth from us most earnest Attention; it is a great Indignity and Folly not to yield it. 1 Thess. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 21.

3. We should to their Instructions bring good Dispositions of Mind, such as may render them most effectual and fruitful to us: Such as are right Intention, Candour, Docility, Meekness.

We should not be induced to hear them out of Curiosity (as *having itching ears*) being desirous to hear *some new things*, some fine Notions, some taking Discourse; somewhat to fansie or talk pleasantly about; (as the *Athenians* heard St. *Paul*, not out of Censoriousness, or Inclination to criticize, and find fault (as the *Pharisees* heard our Saviour, *Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him*) not out of design to gratifie our Passions in hearing them, to reprove other Persons; or for any such corrupt and sinister Intention, but altogether out of pure Design that we may be improved in Knowledge, and excited to the practice of our Duty. Acts 17. 21. Luke 11. 54.

We should not come to hear them with Minds imbued with ill Prejudices and partial Affections, which may obstruct the Virtue and Efficacy of their Discourse; or may hinder us from judging fairly, and truly about what they say; but with such Freedom and Ingenuity as may dispose us readily to yield unto, and acquiesce in any profitable Truth declared by them; like the generous *Beræans*, who *received the word* μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, *with all* Alacrity and *readiness of mind, searching the scriptures daily whether these things were so*; ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη, *like infants newly born*, that come to the Dugg without any other Inclination than to suck what is needful for their Sustenance. Acts 17. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

We should be docile and tractable; willing and apt to learn; shaking off all those Indispositions of Soul (all Dulness and Sluggishness, all Peevishness and Perverseness, all Pride and Self-conceitedness, all corrupt Affection and Indulgence, to our Conceits, our Humours, our Passions, our Lusts and inordinate Desires) which may obstruct our Understanding of the Word, our yielding Assent to it, our receiving Impression from it: There were those, concerning whom the *Apostle* said, that he could not proceed in his Discourse, because they were νωθροὶ τὰς ἀκοάς, *dull of hearing* (or sluggish in hearing) who were indisposed to hear, and uncapable to understand, because they would not be at the pains to rouse up their Fancies, and fix their Minds upon a serious Consideration of things: there were those, who had *a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear; who did hear with the ear, but not understand; seeing did see, but not perceive; for their heart had waxed gross, their ears were dull of hearing; and their eyes were closed*; Such indocile Persons there always have been, who being stupified and perverted by corrupt Affections became uncapable of bettering from good Instruction: All such we should strive to free our selves from; that we may perform this Duty to our Guides, and *In meekness receive the ingrafted word*. Heb. 5. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 2. Isa. 29. 10. Rom. 11. 8. Isa. 6. 9. Acts 28. 26. John 12. 40. Jam. 1. 21.

These Practices of hearing, of attending, of coming well disposed to Instruction are at least Steps and Degrees necessarily pre-requisite to the Obedience prescribed; and farther to press them all together upon us, we may consider that it is strictly incumbent on them (under Danger of heavy

1 Cor. 9. 16. heavy Punishment and *woe*) *willingly*, earnestly, with all Diligence and
2 Cor. 5. 14. Patience to *labour* in teaching and admonishing us; they must *give at-*
1 Pet. 5. 2. *tendance*, and *take heed unto their doctrine*, that it may be *sound* and profi-
Rom. 12. 3. table; they *must preach the word*, and *be instant* upon it *in season, out of*
1 Tim. 5. 17. *season*, (that is, not only taking, but seeking and snatching all Occasions
1 Tim. 4. 13, 16. to do it) *reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering, and do-*
2 Tim. 4. 2. *ctrine*; they *must warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that*
Col. 1. 28. *they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:* as they are obliged in such manner to do these things, so there must be correspondent Duties lying upon us to receive their Doctrine readily, carefully, patiently, sin-
1 Cor. 4. 2. cerely and fairly: As they must be faithful Dispensers of God's heavenly Truth and holy Mysteries, so we must be obsequious Entertainers of them: imposing such Commands on them doth imply reciprocal Obligatioos in their Hearers and Scholars; otherwise their Office would be vain, and their Endeavours fruitless; God no less would be frustrated in his Design than we should be deprived of the Advantages of their Institution.

But farther, it is a more immediate ingredient of this Duty, that,

4. We should effectually be enlightened by their Doctrine, be convinced by their Arguments persuading Truth and Duty, be moved by their Admonitions and Exhortations to good Practice: We should open our Eyes to the Light, which they shed forth upon us; we should surrender our Judgment to the Proofs, which they alledge; we should yield our Hearts and Affections pliable to their mollifying, and warming Discourses: It is their Part to subdue our Minds to *the obedience of faith*, and to subject our
2 Cor. 10. 5. Wills to the Observance of God's Commandments (*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*) It must therefore answerably be our Duty not to resist, not to hold out, not to persist obstinate in our Errours, or Prejudices; to submit our Minds to the Power of Truth, being willingly and gladly conquered by it; it must be our Duty to subjugate our Wills, to bend our Inclinations, to form our Affections to a free Compliance of Heart with the Duties urged upon us; we should not be like those Disciples, of whom our Lord complaineth thus:
Luke 24. 25. *O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken*; nor
Acts 7. 51. like the *Jews*, with whom St. *Stephen* thus expostulates: *Ye stiff-necked and*
1 Cor. 4. 20. *uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.* They
2. 4. should speak with Power and Efficacy; we therefore should not by our Indispositions (by Obstinacy of Conceit, or hardness of Heart) obstruct their
2 Cor. 1. 24. Endeavours; they should be *co-workers of your joy* (that is, working in us
1 Cor. 3. 5. that Faith and those Vertues, which are productive of true Joy and Comfort to us) we therefore should co-work with them toward the same End; they should edifie us in Knowledge, and Holiness; we should therefore yield our selves to be fashioned and polished by them.

5. We should, in fine, obey their Doctrine by conforming our Practice thereto; this our Lord prescribed in regard even to the *Jewish* Guides
Mat. 23. 3. and Doctors; *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses his seat; all there-*
fore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; the same we may well conceive that he requireth in respect to his own Ministers, the Teachers of a better Law, authorized to direct us by his own Commission, and thereto more specially qualified by his Grace: This is indeed the Crown and Completion of all; to hear signifieth nothing; to be convinced in our Mind, and to be affected in our Heart will but aggravate our Guilt, if we neglect Practice: Every Sermon we hear, that sheweth us our Duty will in effect be an Indictment upon us, will ground a sentence

tence of Condemnation, if we tranſgreſs it: For, as *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth bleſſing from God, ſo that which beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, and its end is to be burned:* and, *not the hearers of the law are juſt with God, but the doers of the law ſhall be juſtified.* And it is a good Advice, that of St. *James*; *Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own ſelves*; 'tis he intimateth, a Fallacy ſome are apt to put upon themſelves to conceit they have done ſufficiently when they have lent an Ear to the Word; this is the leaſt part to be done in regard to it, Practice is all in all; what is it to be ſhewed the Way, and to know it exactly, if we do not walk in it, if we do not by it arrive to our Journey's End, the Salvation of our Souls? To have waited upon our Lord himſelf, and hung upon his Diſcourſe, was not available; for when in the Day of Accompt, ſome ſhall begin to alledge, *We have eaten, and drank before thee, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets*; *Our Lord will ſay, I know ye not, whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.* And, it is our Lord's Declaration in the Caſe, *Whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine and doth them, I will liken him unto a wiſe man, which built his houſe upon a rock; but every one that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them not, ſhall be likned unto a fooliſh man, that built his houſe upon the ſand.*

Heb. 6. 7, 8. 10. 26. Rom. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 22. Luke 13. 26, 27. Mat. 7. 21. (Joh. 14. 21.)

Many are very earneſt to hear, they *hear gladly*, as *Herod* did Saint *John Baptiſt*'s Homilies; they *receive the word with joy*, as the *temporary believers* in the Parable did: They do as thoſe Men did in the *Prophet*, *delight to know God's ways, do ask of God the ordinances of juſtice, do take delight in approaching God*; Or as thoſe in another *Prophet*; *Who ſpeak one to another, every one to his brother, ſaying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord*; *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people*; *and they hear thy words, but will not do them*; *for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs: And lo, thou art to them as a very lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice, and can play well on an inſtrument*; *for they hear thy words, but they do them not*: They for a time *rejoice in the light of God's meſſengers*, as thoſe *Jews* did in the Light of that *burning and ſhining lamp*, St. *John* the *Baptiſt*; but all comes to nothing; but they are backward and careleſs to perform, at leaſt, more than they pleaſe themſelves, or what ſuteth to their Fancy, their Humour, their Appetite, their Intereſt: Many Hearers will believe only what they like, or what ſuteth to their Prejudices and Paſſions; many of what they believe will practiſe that only which ſorteth with their Temper, or will ſerve their Deſigns, they cannot conform to unpleaſant and unprofitable Doctrines: Sometimes Care choaketh the Word, ſometimes Temptation of Pleaſure, of Profit, of Honour allureth, ſometimes Difficulties, Hazards, Perſecutions, diſcourage from Obedience to it:

Mark 6. 20. Mat. 13. 20. Iſa. 58. 2. Ezek. 33. 31, 32. John 5. 35.

Theſe Particulars are obvious, and by moſt will be conſented to; there is one Point which perhaps will more hardly be admitted, which therefore I ſhall more largely inſiſt upon: 'Tis this:

6. That as in all caſes it is our Duty to defer much Regard to the Opinion of our Guides, ſo in ſome caſes it behoveth us to rely barely upon their Judgment and Advice; thoſe eſpecially among them who excel in Dignity and Worth; who are approved for Wiſdom and Integrity; their Definitions, or the Declarations of their Opinion (eſpecially ſuch as are exhibited upon mature Deliberation and Debate, in a ſolemn manner) are ever very probable Arguments of Truth and Expediency; they are commonly

monly the beſt Arguments which can be had in ſome Matters, eſpecially to the meaner and ſimpler ſort of People. This upon many Accompts will appear reaſonable.

It is evident to Experience, that every Man is not capable to judge, or able to guide himſelf in Matters of this Nature (concerning divine Truth and Conſcience.) There are *Children in underſtanding*, there are Men *weak in faith* (or Knowledge concerning the Faith) there are *Idiots*, ἄκρατοι (Men not bad, but *ſimple*) Perſons *occupying the room of the unlearned, unſkilful in the word of righteouſneſs*, who (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *need that one ſhould teach them which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God.*

Rom. 14. 1. 15. 1. &c. Rom. 16. 18. 2 Cor. 14. 16. 3. 2. 8. 10.

Vulgo non judicium, non veritas. Tac.

The Vulgar ſort of Men are as undiſcerning and injudicious in all things, ſo peculiarly in Matters of this nature, ſo much abſtracted from common Senſe and Experience; whence we ſee them eaſily ſeduced into the fondeſt Conceits and wildeſt Courſes by any ſlender Artifice or fair Pretence; *like children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of Men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

Ἄκειτον ὁ δῆμος, M. Ant. Eph. 4. 14.

'Αλλ' εἰδότες ἑτέροις βέλτιον ἢ τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἠνίας ἐνδιδόναι τεχνικωτέροις, ἢ ἄλλων ἡνιόχοις ἢ ἀνεπιστήμονας, καὶ ἀκολουθοῦντας μᾶλλον εὐγνώμονα, ἢ γλῶσαν νικᾶν ἀπαίδευτον. Naz. *Or.* 1. ——*fide calidus, & virtute robuſtus, &c.* Cypr. *Ep.* 23. *de* Luciano.

There are alſo ſome particular Caſes, a competent Information and skill in which muſt depend upon Improvements of Mind acquired by more than ordinary Study and Experience: So that in them moſt People do want ſufficient means of attaining Knowledge requiſite to guide their Judgment, or their Practice: And for ſuch Perſons in ſuch Caſes it is plainly the beſt, the wiſeſt, and the ſafeſt way to rely upon the Direction of their Guides, aſſenting to what they declare, acting what they preſcribe, going whither they conduct.

The very Notion of Guides, and the Deſign of their Office doth import a difference of Knowledge, and a need of reliance upon them in ſuch caſes; it ſignifieth that we are in ſome meaſure ignorant of the way, and that they better know it, and if ſo, plain Reaſon dictateth it fit that we ſhould follow them; and indeed what need were there of Guides, to what purpoſe ſhould we have them if we can ſufficiently ken the way, and judge what we ſhould do without them?

In the ſtate of Learning (in which the aſſigning us Teachers ſuppoſeth us placed) whatever our Capacity may be, yet our Judgment at leaſt (for want of a full Comprehenſion of things, which muſt be diſcovered in order, and by degrees) is imperfect; in that State therefore it becometh us not to pretend Exerciſe of Judgment, but rather eaſily to yield aſſent to what our Teachers, who ſee farther into the thing, do aſſert; *The Learner* (as *Seneca* ſaith) *is bound to be ruled, while he beginneth to be able to rule himſelf.*

Regi debet, dum incipit ſe poſſe regere. Sen. *Ep.* 94.

Δεῖ μανθάνοντα πιστεύειν, *A Learner ſhould in ſome meaſure be credulous*; Otherwiſe as he will often fail in his Judgment, ſo he will make little Progreſs in Learning; for if he will admit nothing on his Maſter's Word, if he will queſtion all things, if he will continually be doubting and diſputing, or contradicting and oppoſing his Teacher, how can Inſtruction proceed? He that preſently will be his own Maſter, is a bad Scholar, and will be a worſe Maſter. He that will fly before he is fledged, no wonder if he tumble down.

There are divers obvious, and very conſiderable Caſes, in which Perſons moſt contemptuous of Authority, and refractary toward their Guides, are conſtrained to rely upon the Judgment of others, and are contented to do it, their Conſcience ſhewing them unable to judge for themſelves;

In

In admitting the litteral Senſe of Scripture according to Tranſlations; in the Interpretation of difficult Places, depending upon the Skill of Languages, Grammar, and Criticiſm, upon the Knowledge of Humane Arts and Sciences, upon Hiſtories and ancient Cuſtoms; in ſuch caſes all illiterate Perſons (however otherwiſe diffident, and diſregardful of Authority) are forced to ſee with the Eyes of other Men, to ſubmit their Judgment to the Skill and Fidelity of their learned Guides, taking the very Principles and Foundations of their Religion upon Truſt; And why then conſonantly may they not do it in other Caſes; eſpecially in the Reſolution of difficult, ſublime, obſcure and ſubtil Points, the Comprehenſion whereof tranſcendeth their Capacity?

SERMON XXVII.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

BUT farther,

The more to engage and incline us to the performing this part of our Duty (the regarding, prizing, confiding in the Judgment of our Guides) we may conſider the great Advantages, both natural and ſupernatural, which they have to qualifie them in order to ſuch purpoſes.

1. They may reaſonably be preſumed more intelligent and skilful in Divine Matters than others; for as they have the ſame natural Capacities and Endowments with others (or rather commonly ſomewhat better than others, as being deſigned and ſelected to this ſort of Employment) ſo their natural Abilities are by all poſſible means improved: It is their Trade and Faculty, unto which their Education is directed: in acquiring Ability toward which they ſpend their time, their Care, their Pains; in which they are continually verſed and exerciſed (*having*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh, *by reaſon of uſe their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil*) for which alſo they imploy their Supplications and Devotions to God. Heb. 5. 14.

Many ſpecial Advantages they hence procure, needful or very conducible to a more perfect Knowledge of ſuch Matters, and to Security from Errors; ſuch as are converſing with Studies, which enlarge a Man's Mind, and improve his Judgment; a Skill of Diſquiſition about things of ſifting and canvaſing Points coming under Debate; of weighing the Force of Arguments, and diſtinguiſhing the Colours of things; the Knowledge of Languages, in which the *Divine Oracles* are expreſſed, of Sciences, of

Hiſtories, of Practices ſerving to the Diſcovery and Illuſtration of the Truth, exerciſe in Meditation, Reading, Writing, Speaking, Diſputing and Conference, whereby the Mind is greatly enlightened, and the Reaſon ſtrengthened, Acquaintance with Variety of Learned Authors, who with great Diligence have expounded the Holy Scriptures, and with moſt Accuracy diſcuſſed Points of Doctrine, eſpecially with *Ancient Writers*, who living near the *Apoſtolical* times, and being immediately, (or within few Degrees mediately) their Diſciples may juſtly be ſuppoſed moſt helpful toward informing us what was their genuine Doctrine, what the true ſenſe of their Writings: By ſuch means as in other Faculties, ſo in this of *Theology*, a competent Skill may be obtained; there is no other ordinary, or probable Way; and no extraordinary Way can be truſted, now that Men appear not to grow learned or wiſe by ſpecial Inſpiration or Miracle; after that all Pretences to ſuch By-ways have been detected of Impoſture, and do ſmell too rank of Hypocriſie.

Since then our Guides are ſo advantageouſly qualified to direct us; it is in Matters difficult and doubtful (the which require good Meaſure of Skill and Judgment to determine about them) moſt reaſonable that we ſhould rely upon their Authority, preferring it in ſuch Caſes to our private Diſcretion; taking it for more probable, that they ſhould comprehend the Truth, than we (unaſſiſted by them, and judging merely by our own glimmering Light) can do; deeming it good odds on the ſide of their Doctrine againſt our Opinion or Conjecture.

They have alſo another peculiar Advantage toward judging ſincerely of things, by their greater Retirement from the World and Diſengagement from ſecular Intereſts; the which ordinarily do deprave the Underſtandings, and pervert the Judgments of Men; diſpoſing them to accommodate their Conceits to the *Maxims* of worldly Policy, or to the vulgar Apprehenſions of Men: many of which are falſe and baſe; by ſuch Abſtraction of Mind from worldly Affairs, together with faſtning their Meditation on the beſt things, which their Calling neceſſarily doth put them upon) more than is uſual to other Men, they commonly get Principles and Habits of Simplicity and Integrity, which qualifie Men both to diſcern Truth better, and more faithfully to declare it.

2 Tim. 2. 4.

Seeing then in every Faculty the Advice of the Skilful is to be regarded, and is uſually relied upon; and in other Affairs of greateſt Importance, we ſcruple not to proceed ſo; ſeeing we commit our Life and Health (which are moſt precious to us) to the *Phyſician*, obſerving his Preſcriptions commonly without any Reaſon, ſometimes againſt our own Senſe; we entruſt our Eſtate, which is ſo dear, with the *Lawyer*, not conteſting his Advice; we put our Goods and Safety into the Hands of a *Pilot*, ſleeping ſecurely whilſt he ſteereth us, as he thinketh fit; ſeeing in many ſuch Occaſions of common Life we adviſedly do renounce, or wave our own Opinions, abſolutely yielding to the Direction of others; taking their Authority for a better Argument or ground of Action, than any which our Conceit or a bare Conſideration of the Matter can ſuggeſt to us; admitting this *Maxim* for good, that it is a more adviſeable and ſafe Courſe in Matters of Conſequence to follow the Judgment of wiſer Men than to adhere to our own Apprehenſions: Seeing it is not Wiſdom (as every Man thinks) in a doubtful Caſe to act upon Diſadvantage, or to venture upon odds againſt himſelf, and it is plainly doing thus to Act upon our own Opi-

Ὃν ἂν ἡγήσωνται περὶ τὰ συμφέροντα ἑαυτοῖς φρονιμώτερον ἑαυτοῦ εἶναι, τούτῳ ἄνδρωποι εὐπρεπέως πείθονται. Xen. *Mem.* I.

Ἐν μὲν τῷ πλεῖν πειθεσθαι δεῖ τῷ κυβερνήτῃ, ἐν δὲ τῷ ζῆν τῷ λογίσεσθαι δυναμένῳ βέλτιον. Ariſtonymus *apud* Stob. *Tom.* 2. *Tit.* 3.

Opinion, againſt the judgment of thoſe who are more improved in the way, or better ſtudied in the Point than our ſelves; ſeeing in other caſes theſe are the common and approved Apprehenſions and Practices; and ſeeing in this Caſe there is plainly the ſame reaſon, for that there are Difficulties and Intricacies in this no leſs than in other Faculties, which need good Skill to reſolve them; for that in theſe Matters we may eaſily ſlip, and by Error may incur huge Danger and Damage; why then ſhould we not here take the ſame courſe, following (when no other clearer Light, or prevalent Reaſon occurreth) the conduct and advice of our more skilful Guides? eſpecially conſidering, that beſide ordinary, natural and acquired Advantages, they have other ſupernatural, both Obligations to the well diſcharging this Duty, and aſſiſtances toward it: For,

Jer. 3. 15. *I will give you Paſtors according to mine Heart, which ſhall feed you with Knowledge and Underſtanding.* Cypr. *Ep.* 55.

2. We may conſider, that they are by God appointed, and impowered to inſtruct and guide us: It is their ſpecial Office, not aſſumed by themſelves, or conſtituted by human Prudence, but ordained and ſettled by divine Wiſdom for our edification in Knowledge, and direction in Practice: They are God's Meſſengers purpoſely ſent by him, ſelected and *ſeparated*, by his Inſtinct, *for this work*; they are by him *given for the perfecting of the Saints, and edifying the body of Chriſt:* It is by God's warrant, and in his Name that they ſpeak, which giveth eſpecial weight to their Words, and no mean ground of aſſurance to us in relying upon them: for who is more likely to know God's Mind and Will, who may be preſumed more faithful in declaring them, than God's own Officers, and Agents? thoſe whoſe great Duty, whoſe main concernment it is to ſpeak not their own ſenſe, but the Word of God? They are God's Mouth, by whom alone, ordinarily, he expreſſeth his Mind and Pleaſure; by whom *he entreateth us to be reconciled* in Heart and Practice to him; what they ſay therefore is to be received as God's Word, except plain Reaſon, upon due examination, do forbid. Rom. 10. 15. Acts 13. 2. Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. 2. 7. Tit. 1. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 5. 20.

If they by Office are Teachers, or Maſters in Doctrine, then we anſwerably muſt in obligation be Diſciples, which implies admitting their Doctrine, and proficiency in knowledge thereby; If they are appointed Shepherds, then muſt we be their Sheep, to be led and fed by them; if they are God's Meſſengers, we muſt yield ſome Credence, and embrace the Meſſage uttered by them; ſo the *Prophet* telleth us: *The Prieſt's Lips ſhould keep Knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts*; ſo the Law of old enjoined;---*According to the ſentence of the Law, which they ſhall teach thee, and according to the judgment, which they ſhall tell thee, thou ſhalt do; thou ſhalt not decline from the ſentence which they ſhall ſhew thee to the right hand, nor to the left*; ſo our *Lord* alſo in regard to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſaith, *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes his Chair, all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do*; upon account of their Office, whatever they direct to (not repugnant to the divine Law) was to be obſerved by the People; and ſurely in doubtful Caſes, when upon competent inquiry no clear light offereth it ſelf, it cannot be very dangerous to follow their guidance, whom God hath appointed and authorized to lead us; if we err doing ſo, we err wiſely in the way of our Duty, and ſo no great blame will attend our Error. Mal. 2. 7. Deut. 17. 11. Matt. 23. 3. (Eze. 34. 16.)

3. We may conſider that our Guides, as ſuch, have ſpecial aſſiſtance from God; to every vocation God's aid is congruouſly afforded; but to this (the principal of all others, the moſt important, moſt nearly related to God, and moſt peculiarly tending to his Service) it is in a ſpecial manner moſt aſſuredly and plentifully imparted.

1 Pet. 4. 10. They are *ſtewards of God's various grace*; and they who diſpence Grace
1 Cor. 3. 9. to others cannot want it themſelves; they are *co-operatours with God*, and God conſequently doth co-operate with them; it is *God* who doth ἱκάνωσεν
2 Cor. 3. 5. *render them ſufficient to be miniſters of the New Teſtament*; and they *mini-*
Phil. 2. 13. *ſter of the ability which God ſupplieth*; Every ſpiritual Labourer is obliged to ſay with St. *Paul*; *By the grace of God I am what I am —— I have labou-*
1 Pet. 4. 11.
1 Cor. 15. 10. *red, yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me.*

Eph. 4. 11, 12. God's having *given them* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) to the Church, doth imply
1 Cor. 12. 28. that God hath endowed them with ſpecial Ability, and furthereth them (in their conſcionable Diſcharge of their Miniſtry) with aid requiſite to the Deſigns of *perfecting the Saints and edifying the Body* in Knowledge in Vertue, in Piety.

As the Holy Ghoſt doth conſtitute them in their Charge (according to
Acts 20. 28. that of St. *Paul* in the *Acts*; *Take heed unto your ſelves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers*) ſo queſtionleſs he doth
1 Tim. 4. 14. enable and aſſiſt them in adminiſtring their Function. There is *a gift* (of
2 Tim. 1. 6. ſpiritual Ability, and divine Succour) imparted by their Conſecration to this Office, with *the laying on the hands of the presbytery*, joined with humble Supplications for them, and ſolemn Benedictions in God's Name upon them. The divine Spirit, which *diſtributeth, as he ſeeth good, unto every member of the church* needful Supplies of Grace doth *beſtow* on them in
1 Cor. 12. 7. competent meaſure the *word of wiſdom*, and the *word of knowledge* requi-
&c. ſite for their Employment.
Eph. 4. 16.
Rom. 12. 5, 6. God of old did in extraordinary ways viſibly communicate his Spirit unto his *Prophets* and Agents; the ſame he did liberally pour out upon the *Apoſtles* and firſt Planters of the *Goſpel*; the ſame queſtionleſs he hath not withdrawn from thoſe, who under the *Evangelical* Diſpenſation which
2 Cor. 3. 8. is peculiarly the *miniſtration of the Spirit*, (unto which the Aid of God's Spirit is moſt proper and moſt needful) do ſtill by a ſetled Miniſtry ſupply the room of thoſe extraordinary Miniſters; but imparteth it to them, in a way although more ordinary and occult, yet no leſs real and effectual, according to Proportions anſwerable to the Exigencies of Need and Occaſion; And by the Influence hereof upon the Paſtours of his
Mat. 28. 20. Church it is, that our Lord accompliſheth his Promiſe to be *with it until the end of the world.*

Luke 7. 52. *Clavis ſcientiæ, the key of knowledge* ſpiritual, is one of thoſe Keys which he hath given to them, whereby they are enabled to open the Kingdom of Heaven.

Great Reaſon therefore we have to place an eſpecial Confidence in their Direction; for whom can we more ſafely follow, than thoſe, whom (upon ſuch grounds of divine Declarations and Promiſes) we may hope that God doth guide; ſo that conſequently in following them we do in effect follow God himſelf? *He that heareth you, heareth me*, might be ſaid not only becauſe of their relation unto Chriſt; but becauſe their Word proceedeth from his Inſpiration, being no other than his Mind conveyed through their Mouth.

4. We may alſo for our Encouragement to confide in our Guides conſider, that they are themſelves deeply concerned in our being rightly guided; their preſent Comfort, their Salvation hereafter depending upon the faithful, and careful Diſcharge of their Duty herein: they muſt render an Accompt for it; ſo that if by their wilful, or negligent Miſcarriage we do fall into dangerous Errour or Sin, they do thence not only forfeit rich and glorious Rewards (aſſigned to thoſe, *who turn many unto righteouſneſs*) but incur woful Puniſhment; this doth aſſure their Integrity, and ren-

render our confidence in them very reasonable; for as we may safely trust a Pilot, who hath no less interest than our selves in the safe conveyance of the Vessel to Port; so may we reasonably confide in their Advice, whose Salvation is adventured with ours in the same bottom, or rather is wrapped up, and carried in ours: It is not probable they will (at least designedly) misguide us to their own extreme damage, to their utter ruine: *If they do not warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his Life, God hath said that he will require his Blood at their hands*; and is it likely they should wittingly run such a hazard, that they should purposely cast away the Souls, for which they are so certainly accomptable? It is our *Apostle's* enforcement of the Precept in our *Text*, *Obey them that guide you; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give an accompt*; which Argumentation is not only grounded upon the obligations of Ingenuity and Gratitude, but also upon considerations of Discretion and Interests; we should obey our Guides in Equity and Honesty; we may do it advisedly, because they in regard to their own Accompts at the final Judgment are obliged to be careful for the good of our Souls. Ezek. 3. 18. 33. 2, 8.

Upon these Considerations it is plainly reasonable to follow our Guides in all Matters, wherein we have no other very clear and certain light of Reason or Revelation to conduct us: The doing so is indeed (which is farther observable) not only wise in it self, but safe in way of Prevention, that we be not seduced by other treacherous Guides; it will not only secure us from our own weak Judgments, but from the Frauds of those *who lie in wait to deceive*. The simpler sort of Men will in effect be always led not by their own Judgment, but by the Authority of others; and if they be not fairly guided by those whom God hath constituted and assigned to that end, they will be led by the Nose by those who are concerned to seduce them: So reason dictateth that it must be, so Experience sheweth it ever to have been; that the People, whenever they have deserted their true Guides, have soon been hurried by Impostors into most dangerous Errors, and extravagant Follies; being *carried about with divers and strange Doctrines*; being *like Children tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine*. Eph. 4. 14. Heb. 13. 9. Eph. 4. 14.

It is therefore a great Advantage to us, and a great Mercy of God, that there are (by God's Care) provided for us such Helps, upon which we may commonly for our guidance in the way to Happiness more safely rely, than upon our own Judgments, liable to Mistake, and than upon the Counsel of others, who may be interested to abuse us; very foolish and very ungrateful we are, if we do not highly prize, if we do not willingly embrace this Advantage.

I farther add, that as Wisdom may induce, so Modesty and Humility should dispose us to follow the direction of our Guides: *Ye younger* (saith St. *Peter*) *submit your selves unto the Elder* (that is, ye Inferiors to your Superiors, ye that are the Flock to your Pastors) *and* (subjoineth he immediately) *be cloathed with Humility*; signifying, that it is a point of Humility to yield that Submission: Every modest and humble Person is apt to distrust his own, and to submit to better Judgments: And, *Not to lean to our Understanding, not to be wise in our own Eyes; not to seem to know any thing*, not *to seem any body to ones self, in humility to prefer others before our selves*, are divine Injunctions, chiefly applicable to this Case, in reference to our spiritual Guides; for if it be Pride or culpable Immodesty to presume our selves wiser than any Man, what is it then to prefer our selves in that respect before our Teachers; as indeed we do, when without evident reason we disregard, or dissent from their Opinion? 1 Pet. 5. 5. Prov. 3. 5, 7. Rom. 12. 6, 10. Gal. 6. 3. Phil. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 8. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 6.

It

It is then a Duty very reasonable, and a very commendable Practice to rely upon the guidance of our Pastors in such Cases, wherein surer direction faileth, and we cannot otherwise fully satisfie our selves.

Neither in doing so (against some appearances of Reason, or with some violence to our private Conceits) do we act against our Conscience, but rather truly according to it; for Conscience (as the word in this Case is used) is nothing else but an Opinion in practical Matters, grounded upon the best Reason we can discern; if therefore, in any case, the authority of our Guides be a reason outweighing all other reasons apparent, he that in such a case, notwithstanding other Arguments less forcible, doth conform his Judgment and Practice thereto, therein exactly followeth Conscience; yea, in doing otherwise, he would thwart and violence his own Conscience, and be self-condemned, adhering to a less probable Reason in opposition to one more probable.

I do not hereby mean to assert, that we are obliged indifferently (with an implicit Faith or blind Obedience) to believe all that our Teachers say, or to practise all they bid us: For they are Men, and therefore subject to Error and Sin; they may neglect or abuse the advantages they have of knowing better than others; they may sometimes by Infirmity, by Negligence, by pravity fail in performing faithfully their Duty towards us: they may be swayed by Temper, be led by Passion, be corrupted by Ambition or Avarice, so as thence to embrace and vent bad Doctrines: We do see our Pastors often dissenting and clashing among themselves, sometimes with themselves, so as to change and retract their own Opinions.

Isa. 3. 12. *O my People, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*

(Jer. 2. 8.) Isa. 28. 7. Jer. 10. 21. 12. 10. Jer. 23. 11. (Jer. 18. 18. 5. 31. 6. 13.) Zeph. 3. 4.

We find the *Prophets* of old complaining of *Priests*, of *Pastors*, of *Elders*, and *Prophets*, who *handled the Law, yet were ignorant of God*; who *erred in Vision, and stumbled in Judgment*; who *were profane, brutish, light, and treacherous Persons*; *who polluted the Sanctuary, and did violence to the Law, and profaned holy Things*; who *handled the Law, yet knew not God*; from *whom the Law and Counsel did perish*; *who taught for Hire, and divined for Money*; *who themselves departed out of the way, and caused many to stumble, and corrupted the Covenant of* Levi; *who destroyed and scattered the Sheep of God's Pasture.*

Ezek. 22. 26. Mal. 1. 6. Ezek. 7. 26. Mic. 3. 11. Mal. 2. 8, 9. Jer. 23. 11. 12. 10.

There were in our *Saviour*'s Time Guides, *of the ferment of whose Doctrine* good People were *bid to beware*; who *transgressed and defeated the Commandment of God by their Traditions*; who *did take away the key of Knowledge, so that they would not enter themselves into the Kingdom of Heaven, nor would suffer others to enter*; *blind Guides*, who both themselves did fall, and drew others into the ditch of noxious Error, and wicked Practice: The followers of which Guides did *in vain worship God, observing for Doctrine the Precepts of Men.*

Matt. 16. 6, 12. Luke 12. 1. Matt. 15. 2, 6. Luke 11. 52. Matt. 15. 14. Matt. 15. 9.

There have not, since the primitive Times of the Gospel, wanted those who (indulging to Ambition, Avarice, Curiosity, Faction, and other bad Affections) have depraved and debased Religion with noxious Errors, and idle Superstitions; such as St. *Bernard* describeth, *&c.*

Vid. Apol. Eccl. Ang.

We are, in matters of such infinite concernment to our eternal welfare, in Wisdom and Duty obliged, not only without farther heed or care, to trust the Diligence and Integrity of others, but to consider and look about us, using our own Reason, Judgment, and Discretion, so far as we are capable; we cannot in such a case be blamed for too much Circumspection and Caution.

We

We are not wholly blind, not void of Reason, not destitute of fit Helps; in many Cases we have competent Ability to judge, and Means sufficient to attain Knowledge; we are therefore concerned to use our eyes, to employ our reason, to embrace and improve the advantages vouchsafed us.

We are accomptable personally for all our actions as agreeable or cross to reason; if we are mistaken by our own default, or misled by the ill guidance of others, we shall however deeply suffer for it, and *die in our iniquity*; the Ignorance, or errour of our Guides will not wholly excuse us from guilt, or exempt us from punishment; it is fit therefore that we should be allowed, as to the sum of the matter, to judge and chuse for our selves: for if our salvation were wholly placed in the hands of others, so that we could not but in case of their Errour or Default miscarry: our Ruin would be inevitable, and consequently not just; we should perish without blame, if we were bound as a blind and brutish Herd, to follow others. Ezek. 3. 18.

We, in order to our Practice (which must be regulated by Faith and Knowledge) and toward preparing our selves for our grand Accompt, are obliged to get a Knowledge and Perswasion concerning our Duty; *to prove* (or search and examine) *what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God*; for Ignorance (if any wise by our Endeavour vincible) will not secure us: *He that* (saith our *Lord* and *Judge*) *knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes* (few; not in themselves, but comparatively to those, which shall be inflicted on them, who transgress against Knowledge and Conscience.) Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 5. 10. Luke 12. 48.

We are bound to study Truth, to improve our Minds in the Knowledge and Love of it, to be firmly perswaded of it in a rational Way; so that we be not easily shaken or seduced from it.

The *Apostles* do charge it upon us, as our Duty and Concernment; that we *abound in faith and knowledge*; that we *be rooted and built up in Christ, and stablished in the faith, so as to be steadfast and unmovable*, not to *be soon shaken in mind or troubled*; *to grow up and increase in all divine knowledge*; that *the word of God should dwell richly in us in all wisdom*; that we should *be filled with all knowledge, so as to be able to teach, and admonish one another*; that *our love should abound more and more in knowledge and all judgment, that we may approve things excellemt* (or scan things different) that we *be enriched in all the word* (that is, in all the Doctrine of the Gospel) *and in all knowledge*; that *we be filled in the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*; that we should not be unwise, *but understanding what the will of the Lord is*; That we should *be perfect and compleat in all the will of God* (that is, first, in the Knowledge of it; then in compliance with it) that *in understanding we should not be children, but perfect men.* 2 Cor. 8. 7. Col. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Thess. 2. 2. Col. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 2. 2. Eph. 4. 15. Col. 1. 16. Rom. 5. 14. Heb. 5. 12. Phil. 1. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 1. 5. Col. 1. 9. Eph. 5. 17. Col. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Heb. 9. 12.

We are likewise by them commanded to *take heed of false Prophets*, to *try the spirits, whether they are of God, to see that no man deceive us*; to *look that no man spoil us by vain deceit, to try all thidgs, and hold fast that which is good*; which Precepts imply that we should be furnished with a good Faculty of Judgment and competent Knowledge in the principal matters of Christian Doctrine, concerning both the Mysteries of Faith, and Rules of Practice. Our *Lord* himself and his *Apostles* did not upon other Terms than of rational Consideration and Discussion exact Credit and Obedience to their Words, they did not insist barely upon their own Authority, but exhorted their Disciples to examine strictly, and judge faithfully concerning the Truth and Reasonableness of their Doctrine: *Search the Scriptures*, for *they testifie of me: If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe me not, believe the works:* so our Lord Mat. 7. 15. 1 John 4. 1. Mat. 24. 4. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8, 18. 1 Thess. 5 21. John 5. 39. John 10. 37, 38. 15. 22, 24. 12. 48.

Lord appealed to their reaſon, proceed ing upon grounds of Scripture, and
1 Cor. 10. 15. common Senſe: and, *I ſpeak to wiſe men, judge ye what I ſay*; ſo Saint *Paul* addreſſed his Diſcourſe to his Diſciples; otherwiſe we ſhould be uncapable to obſerve them.

We are alſo bound to defer the principal Regard to God's Wiſdom and Will, ſo as without Reſervation or Exception, to embrace whatever he doth ſay, to obey what he poſitively doth command: whatever Authority doth contradict his Word, or croſs his Command, in ſuch Caſes we may
Acts 4. 19. remonſtrate with the *Apoſtles*, *If it be juſt before God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye:* and *we ought to obey God rather than men*; we
Acts 5. 29. Gal. 1. 8. may denounce with St. *Paul*, *If an angel from heaven preach any other Goſpel, let him be accurſed.*

Rom. 14. 23. We are obliged always to act *with faith* (that is, with a Perſwaſion concerning the Lawfulneſs of what we do) for *Whatever is not of faith*, is
Rom. 14. 22 *ſin: We ſhould never condemn our ſelves in what we try or* embrace.

Theſe things conſidered, we may, and it much behoveth us, reſerving due reſpect to our Guides, with Humility and Modeſty to weigh and ſcan their Dictates and their Orders; leſt by them unawares we be drawn into
Acts 17. 11. Errour or Sin; like the ingenuous *Beræans*, who did ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς, *ſearch and examine the ſcriptures if thoſe things were ſo.* Our Guides are
2 Cor. 1. 24. but the *helpers*, they are not Lords of our Faith; the *Apoſtles* themſelves were not.

We may, and are bound, if they tell us things evidently repugnant to God's Word, or to ſound Reaſon and common Senſe, to diſſent from them; if they impoſe on us things evidently contrary to God's Law, to forbear
Iſa. 8. 20. Compliance with them; we may in ſuch Caſes appeal *ad legem & teſtimonium*; we muſt not admit a *non obſtante* to God's Law.
Plebs timens Dominum ſeparare ſe debet à peccatore præpoſito. Cypr.

If other Arguments (weighed in the Balance of honeſt and impartial Reaſon, with cautious and induſtrious Conſideartion) do overpoize the Authority of our Guides; let us in God's Name adhere to them; and follow our own Judgments; it would be a Violation of our Conſcience, a Prevarication toward our own Souls, and a Rebellion againſt God to do otherwiſe; when againſt our own Mind, ſo carefully informed, we follow the Dictates of others, we like Fools raſhly adventure and proſtitute our Souls.

This Proceeding is no wiſe inconſiſtent with what we delivered before; for this due Warineſs in examining, this Reſervation in aſſenting, this Exception in Practice, in ſome caſes, wherein the Matter hath Evidence, and we a Faculty to judge, doth no-wiſe hinder, but that we ſhould defer much Regard to the Judgment of our Guides; that we ſhould in thoſe caſes, wherein no Light diſcovereth it ſelf out-ſhining their Authority, rely upon it; that where our Eyes will not ſerve clearly to direct us, we ſhould uſe theirs; where our Reaſon faileth to ſatisfie us, we ſhould acquieſce in theirs; that we ſhould regard their Judgments ſo far, that no petty Scruple emerging, no faint Semblance of Reaſon ſhould prevail upon us to diſſent from their Doctrine, to reject their Advice, to diſobey their Injunctions.

In fine, let us remember, that the Mouth of Truth which bid us to *beware of the* bad *doctrine* of thoſe who *ſate in Moſes's Chair*, did alſo charge
Mat. 15. 14. 33. 3. us *to obſerve all they taught and enjoined*; that is, all not certainly repugnant to the Divine Law. In effect, if we diſcoſt from the Advices of our ſober Teachers, appointed for us by God; we ſhall in the end have Occaſion to bewail with him in the *Proverbs*, *How have I hated inſtruction, and*
Pro. 5. 12, 13. *my heart deſpiſed reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me?*

To

To these things I shall only add one Rule, which we may well suppose comprised in the Precept we treat upon; which is, that at least we forbear openly to dissent from our Guides, or to contradict their Doctrine; except only, if it be not so false (which never, or rarely can happen among us) as to subvert the Foundations of Faith, or Practice of Holiness. If we cannot be internally convinced by their Discourses, if their Authority cannot sway with us against the prevalence of other Reasons, yet may we spare outwardly to oppose them, or to slight their Judgment; for doing thus doth tend as to the disgrace of their Persons, so to the Disparagement of their Office, to an obstructing the efficacy of their Ministry, to the infringement of Order and Peace in the Church: for when the inconsiderate People shall see their Teachers distrusted and disrespected; when they perceive their Doctrine may be challenged, and opposed by plausible Discourses; then will they hardly trust them, or comply with them in Matters most certain and necessary; than which Disposition in the People there cannot happen any thing more prejudicial or baneful to the Church.

But let thus much serve for the Obedience due to the Doctrine of our Guides: let us consider that which we owe to them in reference to their Conversation and Practice.

The following their Practice may well be referr'd to this Precept; for that their Practice is a kind of living Doctrine, a visible Law or Rule of Action; and because indeed the Notion of a Guide primarily doth imply Example; that he which is guided should respect the Guide as a Precedent, being concerned to walk after his Footsteps.

Most of the Reasons which urge Deference to their Judgment in teaching, do in proportion infer Obligation to follow their Example, (which indeed is the most easie and clear way of instruction to vulgar Capacity; carrying with it also most efficacious Encouragement and Excitement to Practice:) they are obliged, and it is expected from them to live with especial Regularity, Circumspection, and Strictness of Conversation; they are by God's Grace especially disposed and enabled to do so; and many common Advantages they have of doing so; (a more perfect Knowledge of things, Firmness of Principles, and Clearness of Notions; a deeper Tincture, and more savoury Relish of Truth, attained by continual Meditation thereon; consequently a Purity of Mind and Affection, a Retirement from the World and its Temptation, Freedom from Distraction of worldly Care, and the Incumbrances of Business, with the like.)

They are often charged to be exemplary in Conversation (as we before shewed) and that involveth a correspondent Obligation to follow them. They must (like St. *John Baptist*) *be burning and shining lights; stars in God's right hand; lights of the world; whose light should shine before men, that men may see their good works*; and by their Light direct their Steps. Joh. 5. 35. Apoc. 16. 20. Mat. 5. 14, 16.

They are proposed as Copies, which signifies that we must in our Practice transcribe them.

We are often directly commanded to imitate them; ὧν μιμεῖσθε τὴν πίστιν, *whose faith imitate ye* (that is, their faithful Perseverance in the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity) saith the *Apostle* in this Chapter.

Their Conversation is safely imitable in all Cases, wherein no better Rule appeareth, and when it doth not appear discordant from God's Law, and the Dictates of sound Reason; for supposing that Discordance, we cease to be obliged to follow them; as when our Lord prescribeth in respect to the Pharisees; *Whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works; for they say and do not.* Mat. 23. 3.

It is indeed easier for them to speak well than to do well; their Doctrine therefore is more commonly a sure Guide than their Practice; yet when there wanteth a clearer guidance of Doctrine, their Practice may pass for instructive; and a probable Argument or Warrant of Action.

SERMON XXVIII.

Of Self-love in general.

2 TIM. III. 1.

For men shall be lovers of themselves.

Καιροὶ χαλεποὶ ἐνστήσονται.

SAINT *Paul* in this place out of a prophetical Spirit instructing or warning his Disciple *Timothy*, concerning *difficult times*, or the calamitous state of things, which should ensue; induced upon the World, as it useth to happen, by a general prevalency of vicious Dispositions and Practices among Men, doth thence take occasion by a specification of their Vices to characterize the Persons, who should concur to produce that hard State.

Hæc omnia mala ab eo velut fonte manantia, quod primum posuit, seipsos amantes. Augustin. *in* Joh. *Tract.* 123.

Among those Vices he placeth Self-love in the Van, as the capital and leading Vice; intimating thereby, that it is of all in its nature most heinous, or in its influence most noxious.

This indeed is of all Vices the most common, so deeply radicated in our Nature, and so generally over-spreading the World, that no Man thoroughly is exempted from it, most Men are greatly tainted with it, some are wholly possessed and acted by it; this is the Root, from which all other Vices do grow, and without which hardly any Sin could subsist; the chief Vices especially have an obvious and evident dependence thereon.

All impiety doth involve a loving our selves in undue manner and measure; so that we set our selves in our esteem and affection before God; we prefer our own Conceits to his Judgment and Advice; we raise our Pleasure above his Will and Authority; we bandy Forces with him, and are like the prophane *Belshazzar*, of whom it is said, *Thou hast lifted up thy self against* (or above) *the Lord of Heaven.*

From hence particularly by a manifest extraction are derived those chief and common Vices, Pride, Ambition, Envy, Avarice, Intemperance, Injustice, Uncharitableness, Peevishness, Stubbornness, Discontent and Impatience. For,

We over-value our selves, our Qualities and Endowments, our Powers and Abilities, our Fortunes and external Advantages; hence are we so proud, that is, so lofty in our Conceits, and fastuous in our Demeanour.

We

We would be the only Men or moſt conſiderable in the World; hence are we ambitious, hence continually with unſatiable greedineſs we do affect and ſtrive to procure encreaſe of Reputation, of Power, of Dignity.

We would engroſs to our ſelves all ſorts of good things in higheſt degree; hence enviouſly we become jealous of the Worth and Vertue, we grudge and repine at the Proſperity of others; as if they defalked ſomewhat from our Excellency, or did eclipſe the brightneſs of our Fortune.

We deſire to be not only full in our Enjoyment, but free and abſolute in our Dominion of things; not only ſecure from needing the Succour of other Men, but independant in regard to God's Providence; hence are we ſo covetous of Wealth, hence we ſo eagerly ſcrape it, and ſo carefully hoard it up.

We can refuſe our dear ſelves no Satisfaction, although unreaſonable or hurtful; therefore we ſo readily gratifie ſenſual Appetites in unlawful or exceſſive enjoyments of Pleaſure.

Being blinded or tranſported with fond dotage on our ſelves, we cannot diſcern, or will not regard what is due to others; hence are we apt upon occaſion to do them wrong.

Love to our ſelves doth in ſuch manner ſuck in and ſwallow our Spirits, doth ſo pinch in and contract our Hearts, doth according to its computation ſo confine and abridge our Intereſts, that we cannot in our Affection, or in real expreſſion of Kindneſs tend outwards; that we can afford little Good-will, or impart little Good to others.

Deeming our ſelves extremely wiſe and worthy of regard, we cannot endure to be contradicted in our Opinion, or croſſed in our Humour; upon any ſuch occaſion our Choler riſeth, and eaſily we break forth into violent Heats of Paſſion.

From the like Cauſes it is, that we cannot willingly ſtoop to due obeiſance of our Superiours, in reverence to their Perſons, and obſervance of their Laws; that we cannot contentedly acquieſce in the ſtation or portion aſſigned us by Providence; that we cannot patiently ſupport our Condition, or accept the Events befalling us.

In fine, if ſurveying all the ſeveral kinds of naughty Diſpoſitions in our Souls, and of Miſcarriages in our Lives, we do ſcan their particular Nature, and ſearch into their original Cauſes; we ſhall find inordinate Self-love to be a main Ingredient, and a common Source of them all: ſo that a *Divine* of great Name had ſome reaſon to affirm, that *Original Sin* (or that innate Diſtemper from which Men generally become ſo very prone to Evil, and averſe to Good) doth conſiſt in Self-love, diſpoſing us to all kinds of irregularity and exceſs: St. *Paul* therefore might well ſet this in the Front of all thoſe Sins, which depraved the Age he ſpake of; they having all ſuch a dependence on it.

Eſt ergò iſta ad peccandum amore ſui propenſio, peccatum originale, &c. Zuingl. *apud* Bell. *de Amiſſ grat.* 4. 2.

It is therefore very requiſite that we ſhould well underſtand this Fault, that we may be the better able to curb and correct it; to which purpoſe I ſhall endeavour, by God's help, ſomewhat to declare its Nature.

The Word *Self-love* is ambiguous; for all Self-love is not culpable; there is a neceſſary and unavoidable, there is an innocent and allowable, there is a worthy and commendable Self-love.

There is a Self-love, originally implanted by God himſelf in our Nature, in order to the preſervation and enjoyment of our Being; the which is common to us with all Creatures, and cannot any-wiſe be extirpated; for *No man* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *ever yet hated his own Fleſh, but nouriſheth, and cheriſheth it:* Every Man living, by a natural and Eph. 5. 29.

necessary instinct, is prompted to guard his Life, shunning all Dangers threatning its destruction; to pourvey for the support and convenience of it; to satisfie those natural Appetites, which importunately crave Relief, and without intolerable pain cannot be denied it; to repel or decline whatever is very grievous and offensive to Nature; the Self-love that urgeth us to do these things, is no more to be blamed than it can be shunned.

Panis ematur, olus, vini sextarius; adde Queis humana sibi doleat natura negatis. Hor. *Serm. I.* 1.

Reason farther alloweth such a Self-love, which moveth us to the pursuance of any thing apparently good, pleasant, or useful to us, the which doth not contain in it any essential turpitude or iniquity; doth not obstruct the attainment of some true or greater Good; doth not produce some over-balancing Mischief; doth not infer harm to the World, or wrong to other Men.

Τὸν μὲν ἀγαθὸν δεῖ φίλαυτον εἶναι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὀνήσει τὰ καλὰ πράττων, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὠφελήσει. τὸν δὲ μοχθηρὸν οὐ δεῖ βλάπτειν γὰρ καὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τοὺς πέλας, φαύλοις παθήσιν ἑπόμενον. Arist. *Eth.* 9. 8.

Reason dictateth and prescribeth to us, that we should have a sober regard to our true Good and Welfare; to our best Interest, and solid Content; to that, which (all things being rightly stated, considered and computed) will in the final event prove most beneficial, and satisfactory to us: a Self-love working in prosecution of such things common Sense cannot but allow and approve.

Πᾶς γὰρ νοῦς αἱρεῖται τὸ βέλτιστον ἑαυτῷ, ὁ δὲ σπουδαῖος πειθαρχεῖ τῷ νῷ. Arist. *Eth.* 9. 8.

God himself hath to these suggestions of Nature and dictates of Reason, adjoyned his own suffrage, having in various ways declared it to be his Will and Pleasure, that we should tender our real and final Good. He, as the Author of Nature, and Fountain of Reason, may be supposed to ordain that, unto which Nature doth so potently incline, and which Reason so clearly prescribeth. He plainly hath to every Man committed himself in charge, so as to preserve his Being from ruine, and to enjoy it with comfort. He by making so rich a provision for the sustenance of our Lives, and satisfaction of our Appetites, by framing our Bodies to relish Delight, and suiting so many accommodations in wondrous correspondence to our Senses, hath sufficiently intimated it to be his pleasure, that we should in reasonable measure seek them and enjoy them; otherwise his Care would have been vain, and his Work useless; yea, he might seem to have laid an ill Design to tempt and ensnare us: he certainly had no such intent, but as he made us out of Goodness, as he made us capable of tasting Comfort, as he hath furnished us with means of attaining it, so he meaneth that we should partake thereof.

Quia tutela certissima ex proximo est, sibi quisque commissus est. Sen. *Ep.* 121.

He also expresly hath commanded us to love all Men, not excluding our selves from the number; to love our Neighbour, and therefore our selves; who of all are neareſt to our selves; who occur as the first Objects of Humanity and Charity; whose Needs we most sensibly feel; whose Good is in it self no less considerable, than the single Good of any other Person; who must first look to our own Good before we can be capable to love others, or do any good to our Neighbour.

He therefore hath made the love of our selves to be the Rule and Standard, the Pattern, the Argument of our Love to others; imposing on us those great Commands of *loving our neighbours as our selves*, and *doing as we would be done unto*; which imply not only a Necessity, but an Obligation of loving our selves.

He doth enforce Obedience to all his Commands, by promising Rewards, yielding immense Profit and transcendant Pleasure to us; and by threatning Punishments grievous to our Sense; which Proceeding is grounded upon a suppo-

Matt. 16. 26.

ſuppoſition that we do and ought greatly to love our ſelves, or to regard our own Intereſt and Pleaſure.

He doth recommend Wiſdom or Vertue to us, as moſt agreeable to Self-love; moſt eligible, becauſe it yieldeth great benefit to our ſelves; becauſe (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *he that getteth it, doth love his own ſoul; he that keepeth it, ſhall find good.* Prov. 15. 8. 16. 11. 17.

Ariſtotle ſaith of a vertuous Man, that he is the greateſt *ſelf-lover*; Δόξειε δ' ἂν ὁ τοιοῦτος εἶναι μᾶλλον φίλαυτος· ἀπονέμει γὰρ ἑαυτῷ τὰ κάλλιστα, καὶ μάλιστα ἀγαθὰ, καὶ χαρίζεται ἑαυτῷ τῷ κυριωτάτῳ. Ethic. 9. 8.

He diſſuadeth from Vice, as therefore deteſtable, becauſe the embracing it doth imply hatred of our ſelves, bringing miſchief and damage to us; becauſe (as the *Wiſe-man* doth expreſs it) *he that ſinneth, wrongeth his own ſoul; he that deſpiſeth inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own ſoul; he that committeth injury, hateth his own ſoul.* Prov. 8. 36. 15. 36. 29. 24.

He commendeth his Laws to our obſervance, by declaring them in their deſign and tendency chiefly to regard our good and advantage; made apt to preſerve the ſafety and quiet, to promote the wealth and proſperity of our lives; to bring eaſe and comfort to our Minds, grace and ornament to our Names, ſalvation and happineſs to our Souls. Deut. 10. 12. Mic. 6. 8. Neh. 9. 13. Prov. 3. & 4. &c.

In fine, God chargeth and encourageth us to affect and purſue the higheſt Goods whereof we are capable; moſt ample Riches, moſt ſublime Honours, moſt ſweet Pleaſures, moſt complete Felicity; *He* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *will render to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; to ſeek ſuch things is the higheſt inſtance, is the ſureſt argument of Self-love, that can be; he therefore, who obligeth, who encourageth us thereto, doth plainly ſhew his approbation of a Self-love. Rom. 2. 7.

So it appeareth, that all Self-love is not culpable, but that ſome kind thereof is very commendable; how then ſhall we diſtinguiſh; how ſhall we *ſever* (to uſe the Prophet's Language) *the precious from the vile?* Jer. 15. 19.

To this we may anſwer in general, that all Love of our ſelves, which is unreaſonably grounded, or which is exceſſive in its degrees and limits; or which venteth it ſelf in wrong inſtances; or which driveth our Mind, Will and Affections toward bad Objects; or which produceth effects noxious to our ſelves or others; is culpable. If we eſteem our ſelves for things not true, or really for things indifferent or mean, for things nowiſe excellent or valuable; if we affect our ſelves beyond compaſs, ſo as to poſtpone the Love of God, or exclude the Love of our Neighbour; if out of regard to our ſelves we do things baſe, or miſchievous; if thence we dote upon vain Profits, embrace foul Pleaſures, incur ſinful Guilt, expoſe our ſelves to grievous Danger, Trouble, Remorſe and Puniſhment; if thereby we are engaged to forſake our true Intereſt, and forfeit our final Happineſs; then aſſuredly it is a fooliſh and vicious Self-love; it is indeed not a proper, but a falſe and equivocal Love, uſurping that goodly Name; it is a real Hatred, or Enmity diſguiſed under the ſemblance of Friendſhip; it more properly may be called Cruelty, Treachery, Flattery, Mockery, Deluſion, and Abuſe of our ſelves.

But for a more diſtinct and clear reſolution of the Caſe, we may do well to conſider the proper Acts of Love, which do conſtitute it, or inſeparably do adhere thereto; ſuch as theſe, a good eſteem of the Perſon, which is the Object of our Love; an earneſt Good-will toward him, or deſire of his Good; a complaiſance in Good, and diſſatisfaction in Evil arriving to him; a readineſs to yield, or procure Good to him; a deſire of

Union

Union and Enjoyment, that is, of intimate converſation and entercourſe with him, a deference of regard to him, a complyance with his Deſires, and care to pleaſe him. Now if theſe Acts toward our ſelves are in their kind, in their grounds, in their meaſures conformable to Reaſon, Piety and Juſtice, then is our Self-love innocent or worthy: if they are not ſo, it is criminal and vicious.

If we do rightly eſteem our ſelves (both abſolutely, and in compariſon to others;) if we deſire to our ſelves what is fit and juſt; if we are pleaſed with true Goods, and diſpleaſed at real Evils incident to us; if we do in lawful ways endeavour to procure things truly convenient, and beneficial to us; if we maintain a faithful and chearful Correſpondence with our ſelves; if we have a ſober regard to our ſelves agreeable to our Nature and State; if we comply with the Dictates of our Reaſon, and ſatisfie our Deſires conforming thereto; then do we love our ſelves innocently, then are we true Friends to our ſelves.

But if we over-value our ſelves; if we do wiſh to our ſelves things incommodious or hurtful, if we are delighted or diſſatisfied in falſe Shows of Good or Evil befalling us; if we ſtrive to acquire for our ſelves things bad or miſchievous; if our converſe with our ſelves is naughty or vain; if we make indecent Applications to our ſelves; if we ſtoop to our fond Humours, or ſooth our unreaſonable deſires; then is our Self-love ſpurious; then are we indeed Enemies to our ſelves.

Farther, toward an exact diſcuſſion and trial of this caſe, we ſhould do well, deveſting our ſelves of Selfiſhneſs, to conſider our ſelves, as other Perſons, or abſtractedly as mere Objects of thoſe Acts which Love doth imply; for what rectitude, or what obliquity there would be in them in regard to any Object, the ſame would be in reference to our ſelves. For inſtance,

If we ſhould value any Perſon juſtly according to his real Worth, allowing a juſt rate to his Vertue, to his Parts, to his Endowments, to his Advantages of Nature or Fortune; not aſcribing to him things which belong not to him, nor over-prizing thoſe he hath, nor preferring him in any reſpect before thoſe which are his Superiours or Equals therein; we ſhall herein do wiſely and juſtly; but if (having our Judgment any-wiſe perverted) we do admire a Perſon beyond his worth, and advance him above his Rank; if we overlook his apparent Defects and Blemiſhes, or take them for Excellencies, and yield them applauſe; what is this but folly and dotage, tempered with iniquity? and if it be ſuch in regard to another, it is no leſs ſuch in reſpect to our ſelves,

If to any Perſon we ſhould wiſh things ſuitable, commodious, and advantageous, by obtaining which, he, without any wrong or prejudice to others, might be conſiderably benefitted, we ſhall herein act humanely, and like good Friends; but if we deſire things to him, which do not become or befit him; which will do him miſchief, or which he cannot have without injury and damage to others, are we not herein notoriouſly unkind or unjuſt? the Caſe is the ſame transferred to our ſelves.

If we ſhould obſerve any Man by Occurrences happening to him well improved in his condition, thriving in an honeſt way, proſperous in good Undertakings, growing in worthy accompliſhments of Soul, to find ſatisfaction therein would be greatly laudable; and ſo it would be to condole, if we ſhould ſee any Man to fall into any grievous Diſaſter or Calamity; but ſhould we behold a Man (although in falſe appearance bettered, yet really) prejudiced and endamaged (as when one is enriched by cozenage or rapine, is advanced by flattery or ſycophantry, is famed for

for baſe or vain Exploits, is immerſed into Care and Trouble, is expoſed to Danger and Temptation, is fallen into the Enchantments of Pleaſure) are we not, if we take pleaſure therein, very ſilly, or very cruel? and if we ſhould obſerve good Phyſick adminiſtred to a ſick Neighbour, or that he is engaged in painful Exerciſe for his Health, ſhould it not be abſurd for us to be ſorry thereat? for the ſame Reaſons we are blameable, if we do rejoyce when that we proſper in bad Courſes, or enjoy ſinful Pleaſures, or fall into dangerous Temptations; if we diſtaſte the wholſom Phyſick of Adverſity diſpenſed by Providence, or diſlike the needful Exerciſes of Duty by God preſcribed to us.

If we do yield our Advice and Aid to our Neighbour, in furtherance of any Deſign, which is honeſt and beneficial to him, we then unqueſtionably do well; but if we do abet or encourage him in unjuſt or miſchievous Enterprizes; if we render our ſelves Pandars to his unlawful Deſires, Factours for his unjuſt Profits, Complices of his wicked Practices, Advocates of his Sins, is this true Love, is this faithful Friendſhip? no ſurely; nor is it ſuch toward our ſelves, when we employ our Faculties in contrivance or atchievement of any unlawful Deſigns, however ſatisfactory to our Deſires.

If we ſhould indifferently (without regard to the Laws of Piety, Juſtice, Humanity, or Decency) eſpouſe the Intereſts of any Perſon, ſo that for the promoting his Deſigns, advancing his Profit, gratifying his Humour or Pleaſure, we ſhould violate the Commands of God, we ſhould neglect the publick Good, we ſhould work injury or miſchief to our Neighbour, would this Dealing be allowable; neither would it be ſo, if for our own ſake, in regard to our private Intereſt we ſhould thus behave our ſelves.

2. If we do affect to hold free, ſincere, chearful, kind Converſation with any Perſon for mutual inſtruction and comfort, this is ſociable and friendly; but if we maintain frothy, foul, malicious, any-wiſe peſtilent Diſcourſe, apt to corrupt, or to annoy him, this is loathſom; and ſo it is, if we keep ſuch entercourſe with our ſelves, harbouring vain, impure, unjuſt, uncharitable Thoughts in our Minds.

If we ſhould defer regard to any Man, anſwerable to his worth, we ſhould thereby practiſe according to the good Rules of Humanity; but ſhould we ſo affect or fanſie any Man that we ſhould care for no Man elſe, ſhould pay no due Reſpect, or perform any Office of Kindneſs otherwhere; ſhould take no Man's Word, or mind any Man's Opinion beſide, nor care to converſe with any other; would this be Love? would it not be ridiculous Fondneſs? it is no leſs, if in regard to our ſelves, we are ſo moroſe, ſurly, or neglectful.

If we ſhould comply with any Man's reaſonable Deſire, this were fair and courteous; if we ſhould confide in the probable aſſiſtance of any Perſon, this were modeſt Prudence; but if we ſhould entirely conform our Practice to the Will or Humour of another, againſt the dictates of our own Reaſon, and to the harm of our ſelves or others; would this be Love, would it not rather be vile and pitiful ſlavery? If we ſhould without any ground, yea againſt plain Reaſon relie upon the help or direction of another, would this be Love, would it not rather be wild Preſumption? the ſame therefore it muſt be in us, if we in like manner are devoted to our own Will, or confident in our own Ability.

If we ſhould commend any Man for good Qualities or good Deeds, this is honeſt; if we ſhould encourage him in good Undertakings, this is charitable; but to applaud his Defects, to bolſter him in ill Practice, this is

flattery

Flattery and Treachery; and in so doing towards others, we are not Friends to our selves, but Traitours and Parasites.

By such Reflexions and Comparisons we may, I think, competently understand the Nature of that Bastard-self-love, which is so vicious in it self, and productive of so many Vices: But more fully to display, and withal to dissuade us from this Vice, I shall particularly insist upon the common sorts thereof, shewing the peculiar Unreasonableness of each, and the Mischiefs consequent from it: they are indeed usually combined and complicated in Practice; and have much Affinity both in their Nature and Fruit; but I shall as well as I can abstract them one from the other, and so treat on them distinctly; they are these, *Self-conceit*, *Self-confidence*, *Self-complacence*, *Self-will*, *Self-interest*. These I shall handle in the following Discourses.

SERMON XXVIX.

Of Self-Conceit.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

1. THE first and most radical kind of vicious Self-Love is *Self-conceitedness*; that which St. *Paul* calleth τὸ ὑπερφρονεῖν, to overween, or *to think highly of ones self beyond what he ought to think*. This doth consist in several Acts or Instances.

Sometimes we in our Imagination assume to our selves Perfections not belonging to us in kind or in degree; we take our selves to be other Men than we are; to be wise, to be good, to be happy when we are not so, at least, to be far wiser, better and happier than we are. The Pleasure naturally springing from a good Opinion of our selves doth often so blind our Eyes, and pervert our Judgment that we see in us what is not there, or see it magnified or transformed into another Shape than its own; any Appearance doth suffice to produce such Mistakes, and having once entertained them, we are unwilling to depose them; we cannot endure by severe Reflexion on our selves to correct such pleasant Errours; hence commonly we presume our selves to be very considerable, very excellent, very extraordinary Persons, when in truth we are very mean and worthless; so did St. *Paul* suppose when he said, *If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself*; such was the Case of that Church in the *Apocalypse*; *Thou sayest I am rich and encreased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable*; they were like Men in a Dream, or in a Frenzy, who

Gal. 6. 3.

Apoc. 3. 17.

who take themſelves for great and wealthy Perſons, when indeed they are in a ſorry and beggarly Condition; into the like extravagancies of Miſtake we are all likely to fall, if we do not very carefully and impartially examine and ſtudy our ſelves.

Again, ſometimes we make vain judgments upon the things we do poſſeſs, prizing them much beyond their true Worth and Merit; conſequently overvaluing our ſelves for them; the moſt trivial and pitiful things (things which in themſelves have no worth, but are meer Tools, and commonly ſerve bad Purpoſes; things which do not render our Souls any-wiſe better, which do not breed any real Content, which do not conduce to our Welfare and Happineſs) we value at a monſtrous rate, as if they were the moſt excellent and admirable things in the World: Have we Wit? how witleſs are we in prizing it, or our ſelves for it; although we employ it to no good end, not ſerving God, not benefiting Men, not furthering our own Good, or any-wiſe bettering our Condition with it; although we no otherwiſe uſe it, than vainly to pleaſe our ſelves or others, that is, to act the part of Fools or Buffoons. Have we Learning or Knowledge? then are we rare Perſons; not conſidering that many a bad, many a wretched Perſon hath had much more than we, who hath uſed it to the abuſe of others, to the torment of himſelf; that Hell may be full of learned Scribes, and ſubtile Diſputers, of eloquent Orators and profound Philoſophers; who *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh Heart was darkned*, not conſidering alſo how very defective our Knowledge is, how mixt with Error and Darkneſs; how uſeleſs and vain, yea how pernicious it is, if not ſanctified by God's Grace, and managed to his Service. Have we Riches? then are we brave Men, as fine and glorious in our Conceit as in our outward attire; although the verieſt Fools, the baſeſt and moſt miſerable of Men, that go on the Ground, do exceed us therein; although (as *Ariſtotle* ſaith) *Moſt either not uſe it, or abuſe it.* Although our Wealth affordeth us no real Benefit or Comfort, but expoſeth us to numberleſs Snares, Temptations, and Miſchiefs; although it hath no ſtability, but eaſily may be taken from us. Have we Reputation? how doth that make us highly to repute our ſelves in a ſlaviſh imitation of others? yet nothing is leſs ſubſtantial, nothing is leſs felt, nothing is ſo eaſily loſt, nothing is more brittle and ſlippery than it; a Bubble is not ſooner broken, or a Wave ſunk, than is the Opinion of Men altered concerning us. Have we Power? what doth more raiſe our Minds? yet what is that commonly but a dangerous Inſtrument of Miſchief to others, and of Ruine to our ſelves; at leaſt an engagement to Care and Trouble? What but that did render *Caligula*, *Nero*, and *Domitian* ſo hurtful to others, ſo unhappy themſelves? what but that hath filled the World with Diſaſters, and turned all Hiſtory into Tragedy? Have we proſperous Succeſs in our Affairs? then we boaſt and triumph in our Hearts; not remembring what the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *The proſperity of Fools deſtroyeth them*; and that Experience ſheweth, Proſperity doth either uſually find or make us Fools; that the wiſeſt Men (as *Solomon*) the beſt Men (as *Hezekiah*) have been befooled by it: Thus are we apt to overvalue our things, and our ſelves for them.

Rom. 1. 21. *Ardua res hæc eſt, optimos non tradere mores.* Mat. 11. 6.

* Τῶν πολλῶν οἱ μὲν ἃ χρῶνται τῷ πλούτῳ διὰ μικροψυχίαν, οἱ δὲ παραχρῶνται διὰ ἀσωτίαν. Ariſt. *apud* Plut. *in Pelop.*

Prov. 1. 32.

Rarus enim fermè ſenſus communis in illa Fortuna——— Juv. *Sat.* 8.

2 Chron. 32. 25.

There is no way indeed, wherein we do not thus impoſe upon our ſelves, either aſſuming falſe, or miſrating true Advantages; the general ill conſequences of which Miſdemeanor are, that our Minds are ſtuft with Dreams and phantaſtick Imaginations, inſtead of wiſe and ſober Thoughts; that we misbehave our ſelves toward our ſelves treating our ſelves, like other Men than we are, with unſeemly regard; that we expect other Men ſhould have like Opinions, and yield anſwerable deferences to us; and are, if we find it otherwiſe, grievouſly offended; that we are apt to deſpiſe or diſregard others, demeaning our ſelves inſolently and faſtuouſly toward them; that we are apt to ſeek and undertake things, which we cannot attain or atchieve; that we neglect the Succours needful to help, or comfort us, and the like; which will appear more plainly, by conſidering the ſeveral Objects or Matters, in which ſelf-conceit is exerciſed: they are eſpecially three; *Intellectual Endowments*; *moral Qualities*; *advantages of body, fortune* and *outward State.*

1 Cor. 3. 18. Μωρὸς γενέσθω, ἵνα γένηται σοφός. *Vid.* Chryſ. *in* Phil. *Or.* 7.

1. We are apt to conceit highly of our ſelves, upon preſumption of our *intellectual Endowments* or Capacities, whether *natural*, (as *Wit, Fancy, Memory, Judgment*) or *acquired* (as *Learning, Skill, Experience*) eſpecially of that which is called *Wiſdom*, which in a manner comprehendeth the reſt, and manageth them; whereby we rightly diſcern what is true, and what is fit to be done in any caſe propoſed: This we are prone in great meaſure to arrogate, and much to pride our ſelves therein: The World is full as it can hold of Wiſe-men, or of thoſe who take themſelves to be ſuch; not only abſolutely, but comparatively, in derogation and preference to all others: May it not be ſaid to us, as *Job* did to his Friends, *No doubt but ye are the People, and Wiſdom ſhall die with you*; do we not fancy our ſelves incomparably wiſe, ſo that all our Imaginations are deep and ſubtile, all our Reſolutions ſound and ſafe, all our Opinions irrefragably certain; all our Sayings like ſo many Oracles, or indubitable Maxims? Do we not expect that every Man's Judgment ſhould ſtoop to ours? Do we not wonder that any Man ſhould preſume to diſſent from us? Muſt any Man's Voice be heard, when we ſpeak? Do we not ſuppoſe that our Authority doth add huge weight to our words, that 'tis unqueſtionably true becauſe we ſay it; that it is preſumption, 'tis temerity, 'tis rudeneſs hardly pardonable to conteſt our Dictates? this is a common practice, and that which is often prohibited and blamed in Scripture; *Be not wiſe in thine own Eyes*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*; And, *Be not wiſe in your own Conceits*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*: And, *I ſay, through the Grace given unto me, to every Man that is among you, not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the meaſure of Faith.*

Job 12. 2.

Οἱ πάντα τοῦ ἴδιου σκιὰ εἶναι.

Prov. 3. 7.

Rom. 12. 16.

12. 3.

The great reaſonableneſs of which Precepts will appear, by conſidering both the abſurdity and the inconveniences of the Practice which they forbid.

If we do reflect either upon the common nature of Men, or upon our own Conſtitution, we cannot but find our conceits of our Wiſdom very abſurd: For how can we take our ſelves for wiſe, if we obſerve the great blindneſs of our Mind, and feebleneſs of humane Reaſon, by many palpable Arguments diſcovering it ſelf? If we mark how painful the ſearch, and how difficult the comprehenſion is of any truth; how hardly the moſt ſagacious can deſcry any thing, how eaſily the moſt judicious Miſtake; how the moſt learned everlaſtingly Diſpute, and the wiſeſt irreconcilably Claſh about Matters ſeeming moſt familiar and facile; how often the moſt wary and ſteady do ſhift their Opinions; how the wiſer a Man is, and the more Experience he gaineth, the leſs confident he is in his own

Quamcunque partem rerum humanarum divinarumque comprehenderis, ingenti copiâ quærendarum ac discendarum fatigaberis. Sen. *Ep.* 88.

own Judgment, and the more sensible he groweth of his Weakness; how dim the Sight is of the most perspicacious, and how shallow the Conceptions of the most profound; how narrow is the *Horizon* of our Knowledge, and how immensely the region of our Ignorance is distended; how imperfectly and uncertainly we know those few things, to which our Knowledge reacheth; how answerably to such Experience we are told in *sacred Writ*, that *Every Man is brutish in his Knowledge*; that *the Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are Vanity*; that *Vain Man would be wise, though he be born like an Asses Colt* (that is, he is naturally wild and stupid) that *Wisdom is hid from the Eyes of all Men, and is not found in the Land of the Living*; that *The Thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our Devices uncertain*; if we, I say, do consider such things, how can we but find it strange, that any Man should admire his own Wisdom, seeing that he thereby doth exempt himself from the common adjunct of his Nature, and forgetteth himself to be a Man.

Jer. 10. 14. Psal. 94. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 20. Job 11. 12. Job 28. 21, 22. Sap. 9. 14.

If also a Man particularly reflecteth on himself, the same practice must needs appear very foolish; for that every Man thence may discover in himself peculiar impediments of Wisdom; every Man in his complexion and in his condition, may find things apt to pervert his Judgment, and obstruct his acquisition of true Knowledge: Is his Temper sanguine? thence becometh he quick, rash, credulous, confident, and peremptory, slippery and fickle: Is it phlegmatick? thence is he slow and heavy, diffident, pertinacious, and stiff in his Conceits: His Mind is either soft and limber, so as easily to receive the impressions of Falshood speciously represented; or hard and tough, so that he cannot readily admit instruction in Truth, or correction of Error. His Wealth distracteth, or his Poverty disturbeth his Thoughts; Prosperity swelleth his Mind up into vain Presumptions and Satisfactions; or Adversity sinketh it down into unreasonable despondencies and dislikes of things; Plenty breedeth Sloth, Want createth Trouble, indisposing him to think well; Ease doth rust his Parts, and Business weareth them out; Inclination, Interest, Company, Prejudice do forcibly sway his Apprehensions; so that no Man can get himself into, or keep himself steady in a perfect Balance, requisite for exact Judgment of things; no Man therefore can obtain a degree of Wisdom, whereof he may with any reason be conceited; the wisest Men surely upon such Experience have been little satisfied with their share; *Surely* (saith one) *I am more brutish than any man, and I have not the understanding of a man*: and, *So foolish* (said another) *was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee*: This Conceitedness therefore is very absurd, and an argument of notable Ignorance and Folly; neither is there perhaps any more plain instance or demonstration of general Folly reigning among Men, than this, that commonly we are so blind and stupid as not to discern and resent our own Folly; *If any man* (saith St. *Paul*) *thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not any thing yet as he ought to know*: that is, If any Man conceiteth himself to be considerably wise or intelligent, 'tis a plain sign, that he is very ignorant, and understandeth little to any purpose.

Prov. 3. 2. Psal. 73. 22. 1 Cor. 8. 2.

So it is if we consider our selves singly; and it is more so, in comparison to others; for what ground can a Man have of arrogating to himself a peculiarity of Wisdom or Judgment? to deem himself extraordinary in that, to which there are no other than ordinary means of arriving? to fancy himself wiser than any other, when as (secluding accidental Differences, that cannot be accompted for) all Men have the same Parts and Faculties of Soul, the same means and opportunities of improvement; the

Zech. 12. 1. same right and liberty of judging about things? did not he, who *formeth the ſpirit of man within him*, put into every Man that heavenly mark, whereby we diſcern and judge of things? Is not every Man concerned in that ſaying of *Elihu*; *there is a Spirit in men, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding?* Do not the fountains of knowledge (natural Delight, divine Revelation, humane Inſtruction, continual Experience) ſtand open to all; and are no leſs common to Men, than is the Air they breathe, and the Sun, which equally ſhineth on them all? is God, the donor of Wiſdom, partial in the diſtribution of it; doth not that Overture reach indifferently to all, *If any man lack Wiſdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally,——and it ſhall be given him?* may not others be as Inquiſitive, as Induſtrious, as Sincere as we in the ſearch of Truth, why not then as ſucceſsful in finding it? Is there any private Chink, through which Light ſhineth only upon us, or Truth may be eſpied? Is there any cunning by-path, in which we alone, with more expedition and ſecurity than others, in the common Roads, can travel on toward Knowledge? What Patents have we to ſhew for monopoly of Reaſon? What right have we to engroſs any Knowledge? Who hath granted us a privilege of ſure Judgment, or an exemption from Error? How can we in trial of Things claim more than a ſingle Vote? or, Why ſhould our word, have more weight than any other? May not any Man, with as much reaſon, prefer his Judgment before ours, as we before his; and if we blame him for it, do we not thereby condemn our ſelves for doing the like? If we do know but the ſame Things, or frame the ſame Judgments with others, how can we be conceited of that which is promiſcuous; if we pretend to abſtruſe Notions, or hold forth Paradoxes, how can that be ground of boaſting, ſeeing the Cauſe ſtandeth conteſted by Authority, no leſs than our own, and that it is vain to triumph over the Opinions of others before we have conquered them? why in ſuch caſes is it not reaſonable to preſume that among the many Diſſenters from us, there are ſome who have as much ſenſe as we, and who have weighed the Matter with no leſs Care, no leſs Indifferency? In fine, may not any Man with good

Ἐν βεγτοῖς. LXX. Job 32. 8. Jam. 1. 5.

Job 15. 8. cauſe, propound to us that expoſtulation in *Job: Haſt thou heard the ſecret of God, and doſt thou reſtrain Wiſdom to thy ſelf? what knoweſt thou that we know not? what underſtandeſt thou which is not in us?*

Such conceitedneſs therefore is very abſurd; and it is no leſs hurtful; for many great Inconveniences, many ſad Miſchiefs ſpring from it, ſuch as gave the *Prophet* cauſe to denounce, *Wo unto them that are wiſe in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own conceit:* It hath many ways bad influence on our Souls, and on our Lives; it is often our caſe, which was the caſe of *Babylon*, when the *Prophet* ſaid of it, *Thy Wiſdom and thy Knowledge hath perverted thee; for thou haſt ſaid in thy Heart, I am, and none elſe beſide me.*

Isa. 5. 21. Isa. 47. 10.

Hæc eſt hominis vera ſapientia imperfectum eſſe ſe noſſe. Hier. *contra* Pelag. 1. 5.

It is a great bar to the getting Wiſdom, to the receiving inſtruction and right information about things; for he that taketh himſelf to be abundantly Knowing, or incomparably Wiſe, will not care to learn, will ſcorn to be taught; he thence becometh more incapable of Wiſdom, than a meer Idiot; ſo did *Solomon* obſerve, *Seeſt thou*, ſaid he, *a man wiſe in his own conceit? there is more hope of a Fool than of him*; of a Fool that is ſenſible of his own Ignorance, there may be hope, that he may by Inſtruction become Wiſe; but he that taketh himſelf to want no Inſtruction, or to be above Learning, is in a deſperate condition.

Prov. 20. 12.

Puto multos potuiſſe ad ſapientiam pervenire, niſi putâſſent ſe perveniſſe. Sen. *de tranq. an.* 1.

It

It rendreth Men in doubtful or difficult Caſes, unwilling to ſeek, and unapt to take Advice; he will not care for, or admit any Counſellor but himſelf; hence he undertaketh and eaſily is deceived, and incurreth diſappointment, damage, diſaſters in his Affairs. As it is moſt incident to weak, inconſiderate, lazy Perſons, who have not a Capacity, will not yield attention, or take pains to get right notions of Things, ſo it doth ſmother all Induſtry, Conſideration, and Circumſpection; for ſuch Perſons think they need no labour in ſearching Truth, no care in weighing Arguments, no diligence in obſerving Things; they can eaſily, at firſt ſight, deſcry all, and penetrate to the bottom of Things; they have at eaſie rates the pleaſure of fancying themſelves wiſe; why ſhould they ſpend farther pains to diſpoſſeſs themſelves of that pleaſure, or to introduce another leſs ſatisfactory? thus *is the Sluggard* (as *Solomon* ſaith) *wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon.* Prov. 26. 16.

It rendreth us very raſh and precipitant in judging; for the firſt ſhews of Things, or the moſt ſlender Arguments, which offer themſelves, being magnified, and aggravated from Opinion concerning our ſelves, do ſway our Judgment, and draw forth a ſudden reſolution from us; it muſt, we preſently ſuppoſe, be very reaſonable, becauſe it ſeemeth reaſonable to us.

Hence alſo we perſiſt, obſtinate and incorrigible in Error; for what Reaſon can be efficacious to reclaim him, whoſe Opinion is the greater Reaſon? What Argument can be ponderous enough to outweigh his Authority? How can he (the Man of Wiſdom, the perſpicacious and profound Perſon) yield that he hath erred? How can he part with the ſatisfaction of being always in the right, or endure the affront of being any time baffled?

It rendreth Men peeviſh and moroſe, ſo as to bear no body that diſſenteth from them, nor to like any thing which doth not hit their Fancy, to croſs their Opinion and Humour, is to derogate from their Wiſdom; and being in their apprehenſion ſo injured, they find cauſe to be angry.

It rendreth them inſolent and imperious in Converſation, ſo as to dictate, and impoſe their Conceits upon others. He that is conceited of his own Wiſdom, will imagine, that upon that advantage he hath a right to preſcribe, others an Obligation to ſubmit; *eo ipſo* he becometh a common Maſter and Judge; and they are culpable, who will not yield him a credulous Ear, who will not ſtand to his deciſion.

Hence alſo do Men become ſo carping and cenſorious; for if any Man's Words do not jump with their Notions, if any Man's Actions be not conformable to their Rules, they ſtraightway riſe up to condemn them of Folly, of Faultineſs.

Yea, hence Men become intolerably pragmatical; for they conceit themſelves better to know another's Concernment than he himſelf doth, and ſo will intrude his Advice, will be angry if his Advice be not followed.

To ſuch Inconveniences and Iniquities this ill-diſpoſition expoſeth us, and to many others; for it is indeed that in effect, which the Holy Scripture repreſenteth as the ſource of all impious and wicked Courſes; to which Men betray themſelves, while taking themſelves to be wiſe, they do ſtifly adhere to their own Imaginations and Devices, although contrary to the preſcriptions of divine Wiſdom, to the dictates of common Reaſon, to the admonitions of ſober and good Men: *We will* (ſay they in the *Prophet*) *walk after our own Devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil Heart*; and, *I have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious People: Which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own Thoughts.* Jer. 13. 10. 6. 19. Iſa. 65. 2. 53. 6.

And,

Deut. 28. 18. Psal. 81. 12. Prov. 1. 30, 31. Isa. 66. 4. And, *If he bleſſeth himſelf, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my Heart:* and. *So I gave them unto their own Hearts Luſts, and they walked in their own Counſels:* Theſe are deſcriptions of bad Men, implying Self-conceit to be the root of their Impiety.

2. Again, we are apt to conceit highly and vainly of our moral Qualities and Performances; taking our ſelves for Perſons rarely good, perfect and blameleſs; apprehending no defects in our Souls, or miſcarriages in our Lives, although indeed we are as full of blemiſhes, we are as guilty of Faults as others; *There is* (ſaith the *Wiſeman*) *a Generation that are pure in their own Eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſs*; to this Generation we belong if we admire our Vertues, if we juſtifie our Lives, if (as it is ſaid of the *Phariſee*) we *truſt in our ſelves, that we are Righteous.*

Prov. 30. 12. Luke 18. 9: 16. 15. 10. 29.

This practice doth include great Folly, and it produceth great Miſchiefs.

'Tis very fooliſh; and argueth the greateſt Ignorance that can be; for ſuch is the Imperfection, the Impotency, the Impurity of all Men, even of the wiſeſt and beſt Men (diſcernable to them who ſearch their Hearts, and try their ways, ſtrictly comparing them to the rules of Duty, God's Laws, and the dictates of Reaſon) that no Man can have reaſon to be ſatisfied in himſelf, or in his Doings: Every Man looking into himſelf, ſhall find his Mind ſo peſtered with vain and filthy Thoughts; his Will ſo perverſe, ſo froward, ſo weak, ſo unſteady; his Deſires ſo fond and unwarrantable; his Paſſions ſo diſorderly and ungovernable; his Affections ſo miſplaced, or at leaſt ſo cold, and dull in regard to their right Objects; his Reſolutions toward Good ſo weak and ſlack; his Intentions ſo corrupt, or mixt with oblique regards; he that obſerveth his Actions, ſhall in the beſt of them (as to the Principles whence they riſe, as to the ends they drive at, as to the manner of their performance) find ſo many great defailances, that he will ſee cauſe rather to abhor than admire himſelf.

Hier. *in* Lucif. *cap.* 6. Who, let me ask, doth love God with all his Soul, ſo as to place in him his total Content and Delight, ſo as to do all things out of love to him, with a regard to his Honour and Service? ſo as to be willing and glad to part with all things for his ſake? Who hath that conſtant and lively ſenſe of God's Benefits and Mercies that he ſhould have? Who hath a perfect reſignation of Will to his Pleaſure, ſo as to be diſpleaſed with no event diſpenſed by his Hand? Who hath ſuch a vigour of Faith and Confidence in him, as will ſupport him in all Wants, in all Diſtreſſes, in all Temptations, ſo as never to be diſquieted, or diſcouraged by them, ſo as to *caſt on God* (as he is commanded) all the *cares* of his Soul, and *burthens* of his Life? who conſtantly maintaineth a fervour of Spirit, a ſteadineſs of Reſolution, a clear and calm frame of Soul, an abſtractedneſs of Mind from worldly Deſires and Delights? Who continually is fervent and undiſtracted in his Devotion? Who with an unwearied and inceſſant diligence doth watch over his Thoughts? Who doth entirely command his Paſſions, and bridle his Appetites? Who doth exactly govern his Tongue? Who is perpetually circumſpect over his Actions? Who loveth his Neighbour as himſelf, ſeeking his good, and delighting therein as in his own; being ſorry for his Adverſities, as if they had befallen himſelf? Who feeleth that contrition of Spirit, that Shame, that remorſe for his Sins, or that deteſtation of them, which they deſerve? Who is duly ſenſible of his own unworthineſs? very few of us ſurely, if we examine our Conſciences, can anſwer, that we are they who perform theſe Duties; and if not, where is any ground of ſelf-conceit? how much cauſe rather is there of dejection, of diſpleaſure, of deſpiſing and deteſting our ſelves?

There

There have indeed been Sects of Men (ſuch as the *Novatians*, and the *Pelagians*) who have pretended to Perfection and Purity; but theſe Men one would think did never read the Scripture, did never conſult Experience, did never reflect on their Minds, did never compare their Practice with their Duty; had no Conſcience at all, or a very blind and ſtupid one. *Who can ſay, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?* was a Queſtion of *Solomon*, to which he thought no Man could anſwer affirmatively of himſelf: *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my own Mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall prove me perverſe*; was the aſſeveration of that Perſon, whoſe Vertue had undergone the ſevereſt Trials; *In many things we offend all*; was the confeſſion of an *Apoſtle* in the name of the wiſeſt and beſt Men.

The Donatiſts —— *remiſſionem peccatorum ſic dati, quaſi nullum habeatis ipſi peccatum, &c.* Opt. *lib.* 2.
Prov. 20. 9.
Eccl. 7. 20.
Job 9. 20.
15. 15. 25. 4.
4. 18. 9. 2.
(Pſal. 143. 2.)
Jam. 3. 2.

Such Men indeed (in contemplation of themſelves, and of their doings) have ever been ready to think meanly of themſelves, to acknowledge and bewail their unworthineſs, to diſclaim all Confidence in themſelves, to avow their hope wholly to be repoſed in the Grace and Mercy of God; (in his Grace for ability to perform ſomewhat of their Duty, in his Mercy for Pardon of their Offences;) to confeſs themſelves (with *Jacob*) *Leſs than the leaſt of God's Mercies*; with *David*, that they *are Worms, and no Men*; with *Job*, that they are *vile, and* unable *to anſwer God*, calling them to accompt, *in one caſe of a thouſand*; that they *abhor themſelves, and repent in Duſt and Aſhes*; that *after they have done all, they are unprofitable Servants*: And is he not very blind, who doth ſee in himſelf thoſe Perfections, which the greateſt Saints could not deſcry in themſelves? Is he not infinitely vain, that fanſieth himſelf more worthy, than they did take themſelves to be?

Job 40. 4.
42. 6. 9. 2.
Luke 17. 10.

In fine, Every Man is in ſome kind and degree bad, ſinful, vile; it is as natural for us to be ſo, as to be frail, to be ſickly, to be mortal: There are ſome bad Diſpoſitions common to all, and which no Man can put off without his Fleſh; there are ſome, to which every Man (from his temper, inclination and conſtitution of Body or Soul) is peculiarly ſubject; the which by no care and pain can be quite extirpated; but will afford, during Life, perpetual matter of conflict and exerciſe to curb them; conceit therefore of our Vertue is very fooliſh.

And it breedeth many great Miſchiefs.

Hence doth ſpring a great ſecurity, and careleſneſs of correcting our faults; for taking our ſelves to be well, we ſee not any need of Cure, thence ſeek none, nor admit any.

Matt. 9. 12.
John 9. 41.

Yea, hence riſeth a contempt of any means conducible to our amendment, ſuch as good Advice, and wholſome Reproof; to adviſe ſuch an one is to accuſe him wrongfully, to reprove him is to commit an outrage upon his preſumed integrity of Vertue. Hence alſo proceedeth a neglect of imploring the Grace and Mercy of God; for why ſhould Perſons of ſo great ſtrength crave ſuccour; how ſhould they beg pardon, who have ſo little ſenſe of Guilt? It is for a weak Perſon to cry, Lord help me; it is for a *Publican* to pray, *God be merciful unto me a Sinner.*

Luke 18. 13.

It breedeth arrogance and preſumption even in Devotions, or addreſſes to God, inducing ſuch Perſons in unſeemly manner to juſtifie themſelves before God, to claim ſingular Intereſt in him, to mind him, and as it were to upbraid him with their worthy Deeds, to thank him for their imaginary Excellencies; like the conceited *Phariſee*; *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men, Extortioners, Unjuſt, Adulterers —— I faſt twice a Week, I give tythes of all that I poſſeſs.* They cannot demean themſelves toward God as miſerable Sinners, who fanſie themſelves as admirable Worthies and Gallants in Vertue.

Luke 18. 11.

Alſo,

Also, a natural result thereof is a haughty contempt of others, venting it self in a supercilious and fastuous demeanour: So it was in the *Pharisees, who* (saith St. *Luke*) *trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others.* Such Persons observing, or suspecting Defects and Misbehaviours in others, but discerning none in themselves, do in their Opinion advance themselves above their Brethren, and accordingly are prone to behave themselves toward them: Such Men as they are the especially good Men, the Godly, the Saints, the Flower of Mankind, the Choice ones, the Darlings of God, the Favourites of Heaven; the special Objects of divine Love and Care: Others are impure and profane, rejectaneous and reprobate People, to whom God beareth no good-will or regard; hence proceedeth a contemptuous disregard or estrangedness toward other Men; like that of those *Separatists* in the *Prophet*, who notwithstanding they were *a People provoking God to anger continually to his face*, were yet in conceit of their own special purity ready to say, *Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou:* Whereas those who soberly reflecting on their Nature, their Hearts, their Ways, do frame a right Judgment of themselves, can hardly esteem any Man worse than themselves; they perceive themselves so frail, so defectuous, so culpable, as to find great reason for their compliance with those *Apostolical* Precepts; *In lowliness of Mind, let each Man esteem others better than himself; In honour prefer one another.*

Luke 18. 9.

Isa. 65. 5.

Phil. 2. 3.
Rom. 12. 10.

This likewise disposeth Men to expect more than ordinary regard from others; and they are much displeased, if they find it not in degree answerable to their conceit of themselves; taking them for silly, envious, or injurious Persons, who forbear to yield it: Such excellent Persons must in all things be humoured, and cockered, otherwise you greatly wrong them.

Hence also such Men easily become discontented and impatient; for if they be crossed in any thing, if any misfortune toucheth them, they take it very ill; supposing they deserve it not, but are worthy of better Usage and Fortune.

In fine, as this causeth a Man to behave himself untowardly in respect to all others (toward God, and toward his Neighbour (so thence he most unbeseemingly carrieth himself toward himself, he is no faithful Friend, no good Companion to himself, but a fond *Mignon*, a vile Flatterer, or a profane Idolater of himself: for (like *Narcissus*) being transported with conceit of his own incomparable Beauty or Excellency, he maketh love to, and courteth himself; finding delight in such Conceit, he by all means cherisheth it, glozing and *flattering himself* (as the *Psalm* hath it) *in his own Eyes*; representing his Qualities to his Imagination in false shapes, he devoutly adoreth those Idols of his Brain. Farther,

Psal. 36. 2.

3. Self-conceit is also frequently grounded upon other inferior Advantages; upon gifts of Nature (as Strength, Activity, Beauty) upon gifts of Fortune (so called) as Birth, Wealth, Dignity, Power, Fame, Success; upon these things Men ordinarily much value themselves, and are strangely pufft up with vain Opinion; taking themselves from them to be great and happy Persons; but seeing (as we touched before) these things are in themselves little valuable (as serving no great Purpose, nor furthering our true happiness) seeing they are not commendable (as not depending on our free Choice, but proceeding from Nature or Chance) seeing they are not durable or certain, but easily may be severed from us; the vanity of Self-conceit founded on them is very notorious, and I shall not insist more to declare it; I shall only recommend the *Prophet*'s Advice concerning

cerning such things; *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom; neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the Earth:* that is, Nothing within us, or about us, should elevate our Minds, excepting the assurance, that God doth govern the World, being ready to protect and succour us; to dispense Mercy and Justice to us; so that how weak and helpless soever in our selves, yet confiding in him, we shall never be overwhelmed by any Wrong or Misfortune. Jer. 9. 23, 24.

So much concerning Self-Conceit, the other Parts of vitious Self-Love may be reserved to another Occasion.

SERMON XXX.

Of Self-Confidence, Self-Complacence, Self-Will, and Self-Interest.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

Of Self-Confidence.

II. ANother like culpable kind of Self-Love, is that of *Self-Confidence*; when Men beyond Reason, and without regard unto God's Providence, do rely upon themselves, and their own Abilities, imagining that, without God's direction and help, by the contrivances of their own Wit and Discretion, by the prevalency of their own Strength and Courage, by their industrious Care, Resolution and Activity they can compass any design, they can attain any good, they can arrive to the utmost of their desires, and become sufficiently happy, not considering that of God (*in whose hand our Breath is, and whose are all our ways; in whose hand is the Soul of every living thing, and the Breath of all Mankind*) all our Being, and all our Ability do absolutely depend; that he manageth and turneth all things, dispensing Success according to his pleasure; that no good thing can be performed without the supply and succour of his Grace, nothing can be atchieved without the concurrence of his Providence; that, *The way of Man is not in himself, it is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps*; that, *The preparations of the Heart in Man, and the answer of the Tongue is from the Lord*; that, although, *A Man's Heart deviseth his way, yet the Lord directeth his Steps*; that, *No King is saved by the multitude of an Host, a mighty Man is not delivered by much strength, a Horse is a vain thing for safety; The Race is not to the swift, nor the Battel*

Ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνῳ δοκεῖ,
Ἢ γλῶσσαν ἣν οὐκ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴ ἔχειν.
Οὗτοι διαπτυχθεῖσες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
Soph. Antig.

Dan. 5. 23. Job 12. 10. Jer. 10. 23. Prov. 16. 1. Prov. 16. 9. 19. 21. 20. 24. Psal. 33. 16, 17. Eccles. 9. 11.

tel to the ſtrong: that (as St. *Paul*, one abundantly furniſhed with Abilities ſuting his Deſigns as any Man can be, doth acknowledge) *we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing, but our ſufficiency is of God:* 2 Cor. 3. 5. 2. 16. theſe oracles of Truth, and even dictates of Reaſon, no leſs than Principles of Religion they conſider not, who confide in their own Abilities, with which Nature or Fortune do ſeem to have furniſhed them.

This is that inſtance of Self-Love, which the *Wiſe-man* biddeth us to beware of: *Truſt* (ſaith he) *in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Underſtanding; In all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy Paths.* Prov. 3. 5, 6. This is that which he condemneth as fooliſh, and oppoſite to wiſe proceeding; *He that truſteth in his own Heart, is a Fool; but whoſo walketh wiſely, ſhall be delivered.* Prov. 28. 26.

This is that which ſmothereth Devotion, and keepeth Men from having recourſe to God; while they think it needleſs to ask for that, which they have in their Power, or have means of obtaining; this conſequently depriveth them of Divine Aid, which is afforded only to thoſe who ſeek it, and confide therein. *---æquum mî animum ipſe parabo.*

This often engageth Men to attempt things raſhly, and cauſeth them to come off unhappily; God interpoſing to croſs them, with purpoſe to cure their Error, to confound their Preſumption.

From hence, if God ever ſuffereth their Attempt to proſper, they ſacrilegiouſly and profanely arrogate to themſelves the Succeſs, *ſacrificing to their own Net*, and ſaying with him in the *Prophet*, *By the ſtrength of my Hand have I done it, and by my Wiſdom, for I am prudent.* Iſa. 10. 13.

This cauſeth moſt Men to fail of true Content here, and of Happineſs finally; while taking them to be, where they are not, at home, within their own hand, or reach, they neglect to ſearch after them abroad, there where they only do lie, in the hand and diſpoſal of God.

Of Self-Complacence.

III. A like act of blameable Self-Love, is *Self-Complacence*, that is, greatly delighting in ones ſelf, or in the Goods, which he fanſieth himſelf to enjoy, or in the Works which he performeth: When Men in contemplation of their Works and Atchievements go ſtrutting about, and ſaying, with that vain *Prince*, *Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?* when reflecting on their Poſſeſſions they applaud and bleſs themſelves, like the *Rich Man* in the Goſpel, *Soul* (ſaith he, looking upon his accumulated ſtore) *thou haſt much Goods laid up for many Years:* Such vain Soliloquies do Men ordinarily make: Thou haſt (ſaith a Man to himſelf) rare endowments of Soul; a wonderful Skill and Ability in this and that Matter; thou art Maſter of excellent things; thou haſt managed very important Buſineſs, haſt accompliſhed hard Deſigns, haſt atchieved brave Feats, with great dexterity and admirable ſucceſs, by thy Wit and Induſtry; thou haſt framed and vented very curious Orations, very facetious Speeches, very nervous and pithy Diſcourſes; thou haſt put Obligations upon this Man, and that; thou haſt got much Credit and Intereſt amongſt Men; the World much looketh on thee, loveth and prizeth thee hugely, reſoundeth with thy Fame and Praiſe; ſurely thy Worth is notable, thy Deſerts are egregious; how happy art thou in being ſuch a Perſon, in performing ſuch Things, in enjoying ſuch Advantages? Thus, with a ſpurious and filthy Pleaſure do Men reflect upon and revolve in their Minds the Goods they deem themſelves to poſſeſs, and the favourable Occurrences that ſeem to befall them; being fond of their own Qualities and Deeds as of their Chil-

Children, which however they are in themſelves, do always appear handſome and towardly unto them; any little thing is great and eminent, any ordinary thing is rare, any indifferent thing is excellent to them, becauſe it is theirs; out of any thing, how dry and inſipid ſoever it is in it ſelf, they ſuck a vain and fooliſh pleaſure.

Hence is that honeſt and pure delight, which they ſhould taſte in faith and love toward God, in the hope of future celeſtial things, in the enjoyment of ſpiritual Bleſſings, in the conſcience of vertuous practice, quite choaked or greatly damped.

Hence alſo that hearty contrition, and ſober ſadneſs, which by reflexion upon their great Defects, and frequent Miſcarriages they ſhould continually maintain in their Souls, is utterly ſtifled.

Hence alſo that charitable complacency in the welfare, and condolency with the adverſities of their Brethren is ſuppreſſed; Hence cannot they be ſatisfied with any thing done by others, they cannot apprehend the worthy Deſerts, they cannot render due commendation to the good Deeds of their Neighbour; for while Men are ſo pleaſed with their own imaginary Felicities, they cannot well diſcern, they will not be duly affected with the real Advantages, or Diſaſters of themſelves, or of others.

Of Self-Will.

IV. Another culpable kind of Self-Love is *Self-Will*; (αὐθάδεια, pleaſing ones ſelf in his Choice, and proceeding without, or againſt Reaſon) when a Man unaccountably or unreaſonably, with obſtinate Reſolution, purſueth any courſe offenſive to others, or prejudicial to himſelf, ſo that he will not hearken to any Advice, nor yield to any Conſideration diverting him from his Purpoſe, but putteth off all, with a ----*Stat pro ratione voluntas*: Say what you can, let what will come on it, I will do as I pleaſe, I will proceed in my own way; ſo I am reſolved, ſo it ſhall be.

Περὶ ὧν ἂν ἅπαξ πεῖπω, μηκέτι με αὖθις πύθῃ. Nero *apud* Dion. Caſſ.
Οἱ ἀμαθεῖς ἰσχυρογνώμονες. Syneſ. Calv.
Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 23. *de Ben.* 438. Arr. 2. 15.

This is that generally which produceth in Men the wilful commiſſion of ſin; although apparently contrary to their own Intereſt and Welfare, depriving them of the beſt Goods, bringing on them moſt heavy Miſchiefs; this cauſeth them irreclaimably to perſiſt in Impenitence. Hence do they ſtop their Ears againſt wholſome Counſel, they harden their Hearts againſt moſt pathetical, and ſoftning Diſcourſes, they *withdraw their Shoulder, they ſtiffen their Neck* againſt all ſober Precepts, Admonitions, and Reproofs; they defeat all means and methods of Correction; they will not hear God Commanding, Entreating, Promiſing, Threatning, Encouraging, Chaſtiſing; they will not regard the advices and reprehenſions of Friends; the moſt apparent conſequences of Damage, Diſgrace, Pain, Perdition upon their ill Courſes will not ſtir them; their Will is impregnable againſt the moſt powerful attempts to win and better them: Let all the Wiſdom in the World ſollicit them, with a *Turn at my Reproof*, it ſhall have occaſion to complain; *They would none of my Counſel, they deſpiſed all my Reproof.*

Neh. 9. 28. Jer. 7. 26. 5. 3. Deut. 31. 27. Prov. 1. 25.

Prov. 1. 23, 25, 29.

This is that alſo more particularly, which breedeth ſo much Miſchief to the Publick, which peſtereth and diſturbeth private Converſation: This maketh Converſation harſh, and Friendſhip intolerable.

——τότῳ δ' ἀνδρὶ μήτ' εἶναι φίλον,
Μήτε ξυνεῖναι, ὅστις αὐτάρκη φρονεῖν
Πέφυκε, θάλπει τοὺ φίλους ἡγούμενον.
Eurip.

Hence are Men in their demeanour ſo peeviſh and froward, ſo perverſe and croſsgrain'd, ſo ſtiff and ſtubborn; with much inconvenience to others, and commonly with more to themſelves.

Αὐθάδεια ἐρημία ξύνεστιν. Plat. *ad* Dionem. *Ep.* 4.

Hence will they not ſubmit to the Commands of their Superiors; they will not comply with the Cuſtoms of their Country, they will not be complaiſant in Converſation; but every where raiſe factious Oppoſitions, kindle fierce Contentions, maintain diſorderly Singularities: they care not how, for enjoying their Humour, they break the peace of the World, they diſturb the order of things, they create tumults and troubles in any Society; they bring Vexations and Miſchiefs on others, on themſelves. They do not conſider, or value the great harm they bring upon the Publick, nor how much themſelves do ſuffer by it; ſo they have their Will, what if the State be plunged into confuſion and trouble; what if their Neighbours be ſorely incommoded; what if themſelves loſe their Eaſe and Pleaſure?

It muſt be juſt as they will have it; what if ten to one think otherwiſe; what if generally the wiſeſt Men are agreed to the contrary, what if the moſt preſſing neceſſity of Affairs do not admit it; what if publick Authority (thoſe whom all equity doth conſtitute Judges, and to whom God himſelf hath committed the arbitration thereof) do not allow it; yet ſo it muſt be, becauſe they fancy it, otherwiſe they will not be quiet; ſo do they ſacrifice the greateſt benefits of Society (publick Order and Peace, mutual Love and Friendſhip, common Safety and Proſperity) to their private Will and Humour.

This is that, which St. *Paul* ſo often did forbid in Word, and diſcountenanced in Practice: For the edification of others, to procure advantage to his Endeavours, to ſhun Offence, to preſerve Concord and Amity, he waved pleaſing his own Deſire and Fancy, he complied with the Conceits and Humours even of thoſe, who were moſt Ignorant and weak in Judgment; he even ſubjected and *enſlaved* himſelf to the pleaſure of others, directing us to do the like: *We then* (ſaith he) *that are ſtrong, ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves: Let every one of us pleaſe his Neighbour for his good to Edification: For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf* (he adjoineth the great Example of our Lord to enforce his own.) Again; *Give none Offence*, ſaith he, *Even as I pleaſe all Men in all things, not ſeeking mine own Profit, but the Profit of the many, that they may be ſaved: Be ye* (herein) *followers of me, as I am of Chriſt*; and again, *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all means ſave ſome: Though I be free from all Men* (that is, although I have no Superiour, that can Command me, or oblige me in theſe Matters) *yet have I made my ſelf Servant to all, that I might gain the more.* What this excellent Perſon was in this Inſtance of managing Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and promoting the Goſpel, that both in the ſame Caſes, and in the proſecution of all other Deſigns, in all our Converſation and Practices ſhould we likewiſe be.

Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3.

1 Cor. 10. 33. 11. 1.

1 Cor. 9. 22, 19.

We ſhould in no caſe indulge our own Humour or Fancy, but ever look to the reaſon of the thing, and act accordingly, whatever it requireth.

We ſhould never act, without ſtriving with competent application of Mind to diſcern clearly ſome reaſon why we act; and from obſerving the dictates of that Reaſon no unaccountable Cauſe ſhould pervert us: Blind Will, head-ſtrong Inclination, impetuous Paſſion ſhould never guide, or draw, or drive us to any thing; for this is not to act like a Man, but as a Beaſt, or rather worſe than a Beaſt; for Beaſts operate by a blind inſtinct indeed, but ſuch as is planted in them by a ſuperiour Wiſdom, unerringly directing them to a purſuit of their true Good; but Man is left *in manu conſilii ſui*, is obliged (under ſore Penalties) not to follow blind In-

Sap. 1. 12. Deut. 30. 19.

Inclinations or Inſtinct; but to act with ſerious Deliberation and Choice, to obſerve explicite rules and reſolutions of Reaſon. 1 Cor. 10. 24.

Of Self-Intereſt.

V. Another culpable ſort of Self-Love is that of *Self-Intereſt*; when Men inordinately or immoderately do covet and ſtrive to procure for themſelves theſe worldly Goods, meerly becauſe profitable or pleaſant to themſelves, not conſidering or regarding the good of others, according to the rules of Juſtice, of Humanity, of Chriſtian Charity; when their Affections, their Cares, their Endeavours do mainly tend to the advancement, advantage, or delight of themſelves; they little caring what cometh on it, who loſeth, who ſuffereth thereby. *Vid.* Chryſ. in 1 Cor. *Or.* 25.

They look upon themſelves as if they were all the World, and no Man beſide concerned therein, or conſiderable to them; that the good ſtate of things is to be meaſured by their Condition; that all is well, if they do Proſper and Thrive; all is ill, if they are diſappointed in their Deſires and Projects.

The good of no Man, not of their Brethren, not of their Friends, not of their Country doth come with them under conſideration; what Scandals do ariſe, what Diſorders are committed, what Miſchiefs are cauſed they matter not, if they get ſomewhat thereby. What if the *Church*, or *State* be reproached, what if the Neighbourhood be offended, or diſturbed, what if the World cry out and complain, if they become richer by it, or have their Paſſion gratified, or find ſome pleaſure in it?

This is the chief ſpring of Injuſtice: For from hence it is, that oftentimes Men regard not what Courſes they take, what means they uſe, (how unjuſt, how baſe ſoever they be) toward the compaſſing their Deſigns: Hence they trample upon Right, they violate all Laws and Rules of Conſcience, they falſify their Truſts, they betray their Friends, they ſupplant their Neighbour; they flatter and collogue, they wind about and ſhuffle any way, they detract from the worth and vertue of any Man, they forge and vent odious Slanders, they commit any ſort of Wrong and Outrage, they (without regard or remorſe) do any thing which ſeemeth to further their Deſign.

This is the great ſource of Uncharitableneſs, for from hence Men affect no Man otherwiſe, than he ſeemeth able to ſerve their turn; the Poor therefore is ever ſlighted and neglected by them as unſerviceable, the Rich only is minded and reſpected as capable to promote their Ends, they become hard-hearted toward others; not conſidering or commiſerating their Caſe; they will part with nothing from themſelves to thoſe who need their Relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their advantage: All their ſhews of Friendſhip and Reſpect are mercenary, and mere Trade; they do nothing *gratis*, or for Love.

This is the great Root of all the Diſorders and Miſchiefs in the World; this Self-love prompteth Men to thoſe turbulent ſcramblings and ſcufflings, whereby good Order is confounded; this engageth them to deſert their Stations, to tranſgreſs their Bounds; to invade and encroach upon others with Fraud and Violence: Did Men with any conſcionable moderation mind and purſue their own private Intereſt, all thoſe fierce Animoſities, thoſe fiery Contentions, thoſe *bitter Emulations*, thoſe rancorous Grudges, thoſe calumnious Supplantings, thoſe perfidious Cozenages, thoſe outrageous Violences, thoſe factious Confederacies, thoſe ſeditious Murmurings and tumultuous Clamours would vaniſh and ceaſe; Self-Intereſt it is that gives

----nullum furor egit in arma.
Bella petunt magnâ victi mercede.----

gives life and nouriſhment to all ſuch Practices, the which embroil the World in diſcord and diſorder. It is not out of pure Madneſs or wanton Humour that commonly Men engage themſelves and others in thoſe baſe and troubleſome Courſes, but out of deſign to get by it; hope of Gain to be raked out of publick Ruines and Diſorders, is the Principle that moveth them, the Reward they propound to themſelves for their pains in medling toward the promoting them; like thoſe who ſet fire on the Town, that they may get opportunity to rifle and pillage.

Ut quiſque maximè ad ſuum commodum refert quæcunque agit, ità minimè eſt vir bonus; ut qui virtutem præmio metiantur, nullam virtutem niſi malitiam putant, &c. Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

He that taketh himſelf to be as but one Man (naturally like and equal to others) conceiving that he ought to conſider the intereſt and right of other Men in the ſame rank with his own, that he in reaſon ſhould be contented with that ſhare, which ariſeth to him by fair means; who thence reſolveth to be ſatisfied with his own Lot, to abide quiet in his Station, to yield the ſame deference and compliance to others which he can preſume, or pretend to receive from them; who deſires only to enjoy the gifts of Providence, and the fruits of his Induſtry, in a due ſubordination to the publick Peace and Welfare; he will not eaſily ſtrive or ſtruggle for Preferments, he will not foment Emulations or Factions for his advantage, he will never deſign to cozen or ſupplant, to detract or calumniate for advancement of his Ends; he thence will not contribute to the Miſchiefs and Troubles in the World.

Self-Intereſt therefore is the great enemy to the Common-weal; that which perverteth all Right, which confoundeth all Order, which ſpoileth all the convenience and comfort of Society.

It is a practice indeed (this practice of purſuing Self-Intereſt ſo vehemently, ſo eſpecially above all things) which is looked upon and cried up as a clear and certain point of Wiſdom; the only ſolid Wiſdom, in compariſon whereto thoſe Precepts, which preſcribe the practice of ſtrict Juſtice, ingenuous Humanity, free Charity, are but pedantical Titles, or Notions merely chimerical; So the World now, more than ever, ſeemeth to judge; and accordingly to act; and thence is the ſtate of things viſibly ſo bad, and calamitous; thence ſo little honeſty in Dealings, thence ſo little ſettlement in Affairs are diſcernible. But how falſe that Judgment is, will appear, if the Caſe be weighed in the balance of pure Reaſon; and moſt fooliſh it will appear, being ſcanned according to the Principles of Religion.

In Reaſon, is it not very abſurd, that any Man ſhould look upon himſelf as more than a ſingle Perſon; that he ſhould prefer himſelf before another, to whom he is not in any reſpect ſuperiour; that he ſhould advance his own Concernment above the publick Benefit, which comprehendeth his Good, and without which his Good cannot ſubſiſt? Can any Man rationally conceive, that he can firmly Thrive, or perſiſt in a quiet and ſweet condition, when he graſpeth to himſelf more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh againſt himſelf the emulation, the competition, the oppoſition, the hatred and obloquy of all, or of many other Perſons?

May not any Man reaſonably have the ſame Apprehenſions and Inclinations, as we may have? may not any Man juſtly proceed in the ſame manner as we may do? Will they not, ſeeing us mainly to affect our private Intereſt, be induced, and in a manner forced to do the like? thence what end can there be of proging, and ſcrambling for things? and in the confuſion thence ariſing, what quiet, what content can we enjoy?

Again;

Again; Doth not Nature, by implanting in our Conſtitution, a love of Society, and averſation from Solitude, inclinations to Pity and Humanity; pleaſant complacencies in obliging and doing Courteſies to others, appetites of Honour and good Eſteem from others, aptneſs to approve and like the practices of Juſtice, of Fidelity, of Courteſie, of Beneficence, Capacities to yield ſuccour and benefit to our Brethren dictate unto us, that our Good is inſeparably connected and complicated with the Good of others, ſo that it cannot, without its own impairing, ſubſiſt alone, or be ſevered from the Good of others; no more than a Limb can, without ſuffering and deſtruction, be torn from the whole?

Is there not to all Men in ſome meaſure, to ſome Men in a higher degree, a Generoſity innate, moſt lovely and laudable to all; which diſpoſeth Men, with their own pain, hazard, and detriment, to ſuccour and relieve others in Diſtreſs, to ſerve the Publick, and promote the benefit of Society; ſo that inordinately to regard private Intereſt, doth thwart the reaſon and wiſdom of Nature?

Nec ſibi, ſed toti natum ſe credere mundo.
——nullóſque Catonis in actus
Subrepſit, partémque tulit ſibi nata voluptas.
St. *Paul*, Rom. 9.

The frame of our Nature indeed ſpeaketh, that we are not born for our ſelves; We ſhall find Man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing, than to have been deſign'd to ſerve himſelf, or to ſatisfy his ſingle pleaſure; his Endowments are too excellent, his Capacities too large for ſo mean and narrow Purpoſes. How pitiful a Creature were Man, if this were all he was made for; how ſorry a faculty were Reaſon, if it ſerved not to better Uſes? he debaſeth himſelf, he diſgraceth his Nature, who hath ſo low Conceits, and purſueth ſo petty Deſigns.

Nay, even a true regard to our own private Good, will engage us not inordinately to purſue Self-Intereſt; it being much hugged, will be ſmothered and deſtroyed.

As we are all born Members of the World, as we are compacted into the Common-wealth, as we are incorporated into any Society, as we partake in any Converſation or Company, ſo by mutual ſupport, aid, defence, comfort, not only the common welfare firſt, but our particular benefit conſequently doth ſubſiſt; by hindring or prejudicing them, the publick firſt, in conſequence our particular doth ſuffer: Our thriving by the common prejudice, will in the end turn to our own loſs. As if one Member ſucketh too much Nouriſhment to it ſelf, and thence ſwelleth into an exorbitant bulk, the whole thence incurreth Diſeaſe, ſo coming to periſh, or languiſh; whence conſequently that irregular Member will fall into a participation of ruine or decay; ſo it is in the ſtate of humane Corporations, he that in ways unnatural, or unjuſt (for Juſtice is that in humane Societies, which Nature is in the reſt of things) draweth unto himſelf the Juice of Profit or Pleaſure, ſo as thence to grow beyond his due ſize, doth thereby not only create Diſtempers in the publick Body, but worketh Miſchief and Pain to himſelf; he muſt not imagine to eſcape feeling ſomewhat of the inconvenience and miſery which ariſeth from publick Convulſions and Diſorders.

So doth Reaſon plainly enough dictate; and Religion with clearer evidence, and greater advantage diſcovereth the ſame.

Its expreſs Precepts are; that we ſhould aim to love our Neighbour as our ſelves, and therefore ſhould tender his Intereſts as our own; that we ſhould not in competition with the greater Good of our Neighbour, regard our own leſſer Good; that we ſhould not ſeek our own things, but concern our ſelves in the good of others; that we ſhould not conſult our own

Eaſe

Eaſe and Pleaſure, but ſhould contentedly bear the burthens of our Brethren: *Look not every Man to his own things, but every Man alſo to the things of others*; *Let no Man ſeek his own, but every Man another's Wealth*; *Bear one anothers Burthens, and ſo fulfil the Law of Chriſt: Charity ſeeketh not its own*; theſe are Apoſtolical Precepts and Aphoriſms; theſe are fundamental Rules and Maxims of our Holy Religion.

Phil. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 24. Gal. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 13. 5.

It chargeth us induſtriouſly to employ our Pains, liberally to expend our Goods, yea (in ſome Caſes) willingly to expoſe and devote our Lives for the benefit of our Brethren.

It recommendeth to us the Examples of thoſe who have underwent unſpeakable Pains, Loſſes, Diſgraces, Troubles, and Inconveniences of all kinds for the furthering the good of others; the Examples of our Lord, and of his Apoſtles, who never in any caſe regarded their own Intereſts, but ſpent and ſacrificed themſelves to the publick welfare of Mankind.

It repreſenteth us not only as Brethren of one Family, who ſhould therefore kindly favour, aſſiſt, and grace one another, but as Members of one ſpiritual Body (*Members one of another*) compacted by the cloſeſt Bands of common Alliance, Affection, and Intereſt, whoſe Good much conſiſteth in the Good of each other, who ſhould together rejoice, and condole with one another; who ſhould care for one anothers Good as for our own; looking upon our ſelves to gain by the Advantage, to thrive in the Proſperity, to be refreſhed with the Joy, to be graced with the Honour, to be endamaged by the Loſſes, to be afflicted with the Croſſes of our Brethren; ſo that *If* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *one Member ſuffer, all the Members ſuffer with it*; *if one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoice with it.*

Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 25. Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 26.

Theſe which I have already handled are the principal kinds of vitious Self-Love; there are farther ſome ſpecial acts of kin to them, ſprouting from the ſame Stock; which I ſhall touch: Such as *Vain-glory*, *Arrogance*, *Talking of ones ſelf*, *Thinking about ones ſelf.* Of theſe I ſhall treat more briefly.

SER-

SERMON XXXI.

Of Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking and Thinking of ones Self.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men ſhall be lovers of themſelves, &c.

Of Vain-glory.

WHEN a regard to the Opinion, or the deſire of the Eſteem of Men is the main Principle from which their Actions do proceed, or the chief end, which they propound to themſelves: Inſtead of conſcience of Duty, love and reverence of God, hope of the Rewards promiſed, a ſober regard to their true Good, this is *Vain-glory*. Such was the vain-glory of the *Phariſees*, who Faſted, who Prayed, who gave Alms, who *did all their works that they might be ſeen of Men*, and from them obtain the reward of Eſtimation and Applauſe: This is that which St. *Paul* forbiddeth; *Let nothing be done out of ſtrife, or vain-glory.* Mat. 6, &c. Matt. 23. 5. Phil. 2. 3.

When Men affect and delight in Praiſe, from mean or indifferent things; as from ſecular Dignity, Power, Wealth, Strength, Beauty, Wit, Learning, Eloquence, Wiſdom or Craft: as, *There are many* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *that boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their Riches.* *Nebuchadnezzar* was raiſed with the conceit of having built a Palace for the glory of His Majeſty. *Herod* was puff'd with Applauſe for his Oration, the *Philoſophers* were vain in the eſteem procured by their pretence to Wiſdom, the *Phariſees* were elevated with the Praiſe accruing from external acts of Piety (Faſting twice a Week, making long Prayers, tithing Mint and Cumin;) all which things being in themſelves of little worth, the affecting of Praiſe from them is manifeſtly frivolous and vain. Honour ſhould be affected only from true Vertue, and really good Works. Pſal. 49. 6. Φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοί. Rom. 1. 22. Rom. 2. 7.

Thoſe who ſeek Glory from evil things (*who glory in their ſhame*) from preſumptuous tranſgreſſion of God's Law (*Hectorly* Profaneneſs and Debauchery) from outrageous Violence, from over-reaching Craft, or from any bad Quality, are not only Vain-glorious, but Impudent.

When Men affect Praiſe immoderately, not being content with that meaſure of good Reputation, which naturally doth ariſe from a vertuous and blameleſs Life.

As all other Goods, ſo this ſhould be affected moderately.

It is not worth Induſtry, or a direct Aim.

When they are unwilling to part with the eſteem of Men, upon any accompt, but rather will deſert their Duty, than endure Diſgrace; prizing the Opinion of Men before the Favour and Approbation of God: As it is ſaid of thoſe *Rulers*, who *believed in our Lord, but becauſe of the* Joh. 12. 43.

Phariſees did not confeſs him, that they might not be put out of the Syna-
John 5. 44. *gogue, for they loved the glory of Men, rather than the glory that is of God.* And thoſe to whom our Saviour ſaid; *How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, but do not ſeek the glory that is of God?*

When they purſue it irregularly, are cunning and politick to procure it; hunt for it in oblique ways, lay Gins, Traps, and Baits for it; ſuch are Oſtentation of things commendable, fair Speeches, kind Looks and Geſtures, devoid of Sincerity, *&c.* ſuch ways ambitious and popular Men do uſe.

Τὸ εὐτελὲς τῆτο δοξάειον καὶ ἀπόπτυσον. Naz. *Ep.* 63.

This Practice is upon many accompts vain and culpable, and it produceth great Inconvenience.

1. It is vain, becauſe unprofitable. Is it not a fooliſh thing for a Man to affect that which little concerneth him to have, which having he is not conſiderably benefited? Such manifeſtly is the good opinion of Men; how doth that reach us; do we feel the commotions of their Fancy; doth their Breath blow us any good?

Qui dedit hoc hodie, cras auferat idem.

2. It is vain, becauſe uncertain. How eaſily are the Judgments of Men alter'd? how fickle are their Conceits? the Wind of Heaven is not more fleeting and variable than the wind of popular Air. In a trice the caſe is turned with them; they admire and ſcorn, they approve and condemn, they applaud and reproach, they court and perſecute the ſame Perſon, as their fancy is caſually moved, or as fortune doth favour a Perſon. Hiſtories are full of inſtances of Perſons, who have been now the favourites of the People, preſently the objects of their hatred and obloquy.

—Stultus honores Sæpe dat indigni.

3. It is vain, becauſe unſatisfactory. How can a Man be ſatisfied with the Opinion of bad Judges; who eſteem a Man without good grounds, commonly for things not deſerving regard; who cannot diſcern thoſe things which really deſerve eſteem, good Principles, and honeſt Intention? theſe only God can know, theſe only wiſe and good Men can well gueſs at; it is therefore vain much to prize any Judgment but that of God, and of wiſe Men, which are but few. *Praiſe becometh not the Mouth of a Fool.*

Falſus honor juvat, &c. Quem niſi mendoſum?

How alſo can a Man rationally be pleaſed with the commendation of others, who is ſenſible of his ſo great Defects, and conſcious to himſelf of ſo many Miſcarriages? which conſidering he ſhould be aſhamed to receive, he ſhould in himſelf bluſh to own any praiſe.

4. It is vain, becauſe fond. It is ugly and unſeemly to Men; they deſpiſe nothing more than acting out of this Principle. It misbecometh a Man to perform things for ſo pitiful a Reward, or to look upon it as a valuable recompence for his Performances; there being conſiderations ſo vaſtly greater to induce and encourage him; the ſatisfaction of Conſcience, the pleaſing God, and procuring his Favour; the obtaining eternal Happineſs.

5. It is vain, becauſe unjuſt. If we ſeek glory to our ſelves, we wrong God thereby, to whom the glory thereof is due. If there be in us any natural endowment conſiderable (Strength, Beauty, Wit,) it is from God, the author of our Being and Life? Is there any ſupervenient or acquiſite perfection (as Skill, Knowledge, Wiſdom) it is from God, who gave us the means and opportunities of getting it, who guided our proceeding and bleſſed our induſtry: Is there any advantage of Fortune belonging to us (as Dignity, Power, Wealth,) it is the gift of God, who diſpenceth theſe things, who diſpoſeth all things by his Providence: Is there any vertuous diſpoſition in us, or any good work performed by us; it is the pro-
Phil. 2. 13. duction of God, *who worketh in us to will, and to do according to his good pleaſure:* Have we any good that we can call our own; that we have inde-

independently and absolutely made, or purchased to our selves; if not any, why do we assume to our selves the glory of it, as if we were its Makers or Authors? 'tis St. *Paul's* expostulation; *who made thee to differ? What hast thou, which thou didst not receive? And if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. John 3. 27.

This is that which maketh this Vice so odious to God, who is sensible of the Injury done him, in robbing him of his due Honour: how sensible he is he shewed in that great Instance of smiting *Herod* with a miraculous Vengeance; because he did not *give the glory to God*, but arrogated glory to himself, receiving with complacence, the profane Flatteries of the People. He hath said, *I will not give my Glory to another.* Acts 12. 23.

6. It is vain, because mischievous. It corrupteth our Mind with a lewd Pleasure, which choaketh the purer Pleasures of a good Conscience, spiritual Joy and Peace.

It incenseth God's displeasure, who cannot endure to see us act out of so mean and base a Principle.

It depriveth us of the Reward due to good Works, performed out of pure Conscience, and other genuine Principles of *Piety*. Ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν *They have their Reward.* Matt. 6. 1.

7. It is vain, because unbeseeming us.

It is observable, that the Word יהלל signifieth to Praise or Applaud, and also to infatuate or make mad.

Glory doth sit unhandsomely upon us, who are so weak and frail, who are so impure and sinful, who are so liable to reproach and blame: 'tis like Purple on a Beggar——a *Panegyrick* upon a Fly. When all is said that can be well of us, we are ridiculous, because a thousand times more might be said to our disparagement and disgrace. For one good Quality, we have many bad; for one good Deed, we have done numberless Evil. The best things we have or do, yield greater matter of dispraise than commendation, being full of imperfection and blemish. Job 12. 17. Isa. 44. 25. Eccles. 7. 8. 2. 2.

Absolutely so; comparatively much more; what are we in comparison to God; whose excellency if we consider, and our distance from his Perfections, how can we admit Commendation? how can we take any share of that which is wholly his due?

If we consider even the blessed Angels and Saints, and how far short we come of them; what can we say, but praise them who are so worthy, and abhor our selves who are so vile?

Seeing there are such objects of Praise, how can it be conferred on a mortal, vile, wretched Creature?

Of Arrogance.

When a Man (puffed up with conceit of his own Abilities, or unmeasurably affecting himself) doth assume to himself, that which doth not belong to him; more than in reason and justice is his due, in any kind, more Honour, more Power, more Wisdom, &c.)

When he encroacheth on the Rights, invadeth the Liberties, intrudeth into the Offices, intermedleth with the businesses, imposeth on the Judgments of others. When he will be advising, teaching, guiding, checking, controlling others without their leave or liking.

When he will unduly be exercising Judgment and Censure upon the Persons, Qualities, and Actions of his Neighbour.

These are Instances and Arguments of vitious Self-Love. He that doth rightly understand, and duly affect himself, will contain himself within his own bounds, will mind his own Affairs, will suffer every Man undisturbedly to use his own right and liberty in judging and acting.

The effects of this practice are; dissentions, dissatisfactions, grudges, &c. for Men cannot endure such fond and unjust usurpations upon their Rights, their Liberties, their Reputations.

Of Talking of ones self.

Περιαυτολογία, *Talking about ones self*, is an effect and manifest sign of immoderate Self-Love.

It may seem a very slender and particular Matter, but is of great use to be considered and corrected.

To talk much of ones self; of his own Qualities, of his Concernments, of his Actions; so as either down-rightly to commend ones self, or obliquely to insinuate grounds of commendation; to catch at praise; or however to drive on our own Designs and Interests thereby.

'Tis an argument of Self-Love; proceeding from a fulness of thought concerning ones self; and a fond affection to ones own things, *Out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh*; assuredly we think much of that, and we like it greatly, concerning which we are prompt to discourse: the Imaginations and Affections discharge themselves at the Mouth.)

This is a foolish and hurtful practice. For,

1. It is vain, and hath no effect. We thereby seek to recommend our selves to the Opinion of Men; but we fail therein; for our words gain no belief. For no Man is looked upon as a good Judge, or a faithful Witness in his own Case; A good Judge, and a faithful Witness must be indifferent, and disinterested; but every Man is esteemed to be favourable, to be partial in his Opinion concerning himself; to be apt to strain a point of Truth and Right in passing testimony or sentence upon himself: He therefore that speaketh of himself is not believed, his Words have no good effect on the Hearers: It is true what the *Wiseman* observeth: *Most Men will proclaim every one his own Goodness, but a faithful Man who can find?* (but it is hard to find one, who in making report, or passing judgment concerning himself will be faithful and just.) Καυχᾶσθαι δ συμφέρει μοι.

Prov. 20. 6.

2 Cor. 12. 1.

2. Yea it usually hath a contrary effect, and destroyeth that which it aimeth at. Self-commendation is so far from procuring a good Opinion, that it breedeth an evil one.

Men have a prejudice against what is said, as proceeding from a suspected witness; one who is biassed by Self-Love, and bribed by Self-Interest to impose upon them. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved.*

2 Cor. 10. 18.

It is fastidious, as impertinent, insignificant, and insipid; spending time, and beating their Ears to no purpose; they take it for an Injury to suppose them so weak as to be moved by such words, or forced into a good conceit.

2 Cor. 10. 13. Οὐχὶ τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα.

It is odious and invidious: for all Men do love themselves, no less than we our selves: and cannot endure to see those who affect to advance themselves, and reign in our Opinion.

It prompteth them to speak evil of us; to search for Faults to cool and check us.

It is therefore a preposterous and vain way to think of gaining credit and love: Men thereby infallibly lose or depress themselves.

Of

Of all words, thoſe which expreſs our ſelves, and our things; *I*, and *mine*, &c. are the leaſt pleaſing to Mens Ears.

It ſpoileth Converſation: For he that loveth to ſpeak of himſelf, doth leaſt love to hear others ſpeak of themſelves; and ſo is not attentive.

If a Man have worthy Qualities, and do good Deeds; let them ſpeak for him; they will of themſelves extort commendation; his ſilence about them, his ſeeming to neglect them will enhance their worth in the opinion of Men. Prating about them, obtruding them upon Men will mar their Credit; inducing Men to think them done not out of love to vertue, but for a vain-glorious deſign. Thus did *Cicero*, thus have many others blaſted the glory of their vertuous Deeds. Γέγονα ἄφρων καυχώμενος. 2 Cor. 12. 11.

3. Suppoſing you get the belief, and the praiſe you aim at, to have complacence therein is bad, or dangerous; 'tis a fond ſatisfaction, 'tis a vitious pleaſure; it puffeth up, it beſooleth. 2 Cor. 11. 17.

4. It is againſt Modeſty. It argueth the Man hath a high Opinion of himſelf; If he believe himſelf what he ſaith, he hath ſo; if not, why would he perſuade others to have it?

Modeſty cannot without Pain hear others ſpeak of him; nor can with any grace receive Commendations; it is therefore great impudence to ſpeak of himſelf, and to ſeek Praiſe.

5. We may obſerve it to be a great temptation to ſpeak falſely. Men when they affect Commendation, will gladly have it to the utmoſt; are loth to wrong themſelves, or to loſe any thing; they will therefore at leaſt ſpeak to the extreme bounds of what may be ſaid in their own behalf; and while they run upon the extreme borders of Truth, it is hard to ſtop their Carriere, ſo as not to launch forth into Falſhood: 'Tis hard to ſtand upon the brink, without falling into the Ditch.

It is therefore adviſeable in our Diſcourſe to leave our ſelves out as much as may be; never, if we can help it, to ſay, *I*, *mine*, &c. never ſeeking, commonly ſhunning, and declining occaſion to ſpeak of our ſelves: It will bring much convenience and benefit to us.

Our Diſcourſe will not be offenſive; we ſhall decline Envy, and Obloquy; we ſhall avoid being talked of; we ſhall eſcape temptations of Vanity; we ſhall better attend to what others ſay, &c.

If we will be ſpeaking of our ſelves, it is allowable to ſpeak ſincerely and unaffectedly concerning our Infirmities and Faults; as St. *Paul* does of himſelf. 2 Cor. 12. 5. 11. 30.

There are ſome Caſes wherein a Man may commend himſelf; as in his own defence; to maintain his Authority; to urge his Example, &c. ſo doth St. *Paul* often. He calleth it folly to Boaſt (becauſe generally ſuch it is) yet he doth it for thoſe Ends. Plut. πῶς τις ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινέσει.

Let another praiſe thee, and not thine own Mouth, a Stranger, and not thine own Lips. Prov. 27. 6.

Thinking of our ſelves.

Thinking of our ſelves, with glee and pleaſure; this is a great nouriſher of immoderate Self-Love, for the more they indulge to a gazing upon themſelves with delight, the more they grow in love, the more paſſionately they come to dote on themſelves.

It is good to reflect inward, and to view our Souls; but we ſhould do it ſo, as to find a wholſome diſpleaſure and regret in beholding our ſelves ſo foul and impure, ſo weak and defectuous, ſo ugly and deformed; if we do thus, we ſhall not over-love our ſelves.

Some

Some general Remedies of Self-Love.

1. To reflect upon our ſelves ſeriouſly and impartially, conſidering our natural Nothingneſs, Meanneſs, Baſeneſs, Imperfection, Infirmity, Unworthineſs: the meanneſs and imperfection of our Nature, the defects and deformities of our Souls, the failings and miſdemeanors of our Lives. He that doth this cannot ſurely find himſelf lovely; and muſt therefore take it for very abſurd to dote on himſelf. He will rather be induced to diſlike, deſpiſe, abhor and loath himſelf.

2. To conſider the lovelineſs of other Beings ſuperiour to us; comparing them with our ſelves, and obſerving how very far in Excellency, Worth, and Beauty they tranſcend us; which if we do, we muſt appear no fit objects of Love, we muſt be checked in our dotage, and diverted from this fond affection to our ſelves. It cannot but dazle our Eyes, and dull our Affections to our ſelves.

If we view the Qualities and Examples of other Men, who in Worth, in Wiſdom, in Vertue, and Piety do far excell us; their noble Endowments, their heroical Atchievements; what they have done and ſuffered in obedience to God (their ſtrict Temperance and Auſterity, their laborious Induſtry, their Self-denial, their Patience, *&c.*) how can we but in compariſon deſpiſe and loath our ſelves?

If we conſider the bleſſed Angels and Saints, in Glory and Bliſs; their Purity, their Humility, their Obedience, how can we think of our ſelves without Contempt and Abhorrence?

Eſpecially if we contemplate the Perfection, the Purity, the Majeſty of God, how muſt this infinitely debaſe us in our Opinion concerning our ſelves, and conſequently diminiſh our fond Affection toward things ſo vile and unworthy?

3. To ſtudy the acquiſition and improvement of Charity toward God and our Neighbour. This will employ and transfer our Affections; theſe drawing our Souls outward, and ſettling them upon other Objects will aboliſh or abate the perverſe love toward our ſelves.

4. To conſider, that we do owe all we are and have to the free Bounty and Grace of God; hence we ſhall ſee that nothing of Eſteem or Affection is due to our ſelves; but all to him, who is the Fountain and Author of all our Good.

5. To direct our Minds wholly toward thoſe things which rational Self-Love requireth us to regard and ſeek: To concern our ſelves in getting Vertue, in performing our Duty, in promoting our Salvation, and arriving to Happineſs: This will divert us from Vanity: A ſober Self-Love will ſtifle the other fond Self-Love.

SER-

SERMON XXXII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

THE World apparently is come to that paſs, that Men commonly are afraid or aſham'd of Religious Practice, hardly daring to own their Maker, by a conſcientious obſervance of his Laws. While Profaneneſs and Wickedneſs are grown outrageouſly bold, ſo that many *declare their ſin as Sodom*; Piety and Vertue are become pitifully baſhful; Iſa. 3. 9: ſo that how few have the Heart and the Face openly to maintain a due regard to them; Men in nothing appear ſo reſerved and ſhy, as in avowing their Conſcience, in diſcovering a ſenſe of their Duty, in expreſſing any fear of God, any love of Goodneſs, any concern for their own Soul. 'Tis Wiſdom, as they conceive, to compound with God, and to collude with the World; reſerving for God ſome place in their Heart, or yielding unto him ſome private acknowledgement; while in their publick demeanor they conform to the World, in commiſſion of Sin, or neglect of their Duty; ſuppoſing, that God may be ſatisfied with the inviſible part of his Service, while Men are gratified by viſible compliance with their ungracious Humors.

Such proceeding is built on divers very fallacious, abſurd, and inconſiſtent grounds or pretences; whereby Men egregiouſly do abuſe themſelves, and would impoſe on others; namely, theſe, and the like:

They would not by a fair ſhew and ſemblance of Piety give cauſe to be taken for Hypocrites; whereas by diſſembling their Conſcience, and ſeeming to *have no fear of God before their Eyes*, they incur an Hypocriſie, no leſs criminal in Nature, but far more dangerous in conſequence, than is that which they pretend to decline.

They would not be apprehended Vain-glorious for affecting to ſerve God in the view of Men; whereas often at the bottom of their demeanor a moſt wretched and worſe than *Phariſaical* Vain-glory doth lie; They forbearing the performance of their Duty merely to ſhun the cenſure, or to gain the reſpect of the vileſt and vaineſt Perſons.

They would be deemed exceedingly honeſt and ſincere, becauſe forſooth all their Piety is cordial, pure, and void of ſiniſter regards to popular Eſteem; whereas partial Integrity is groſs Nonſenſe; whereas no pretence can be more vain, than that we hold a faithful Friendſhip, or hearty reſpect for God, whom we openly diſclaim, or diſregard; whereas alſo it is eaſily diſcernible, that although their Piety is not, yet their Impiety is popular, and affected to ingratiate with Men.

They

They would be taken for Men of brave, courageous, and maſculine Spirits, exalted above the weakneſſes of Superſtition and Scrupuloſity; whereas indeed out of the baſeſt Cowardiſe, and a dread to offend ſorry People, they have not a Heart to act according to their Duty, their Judgment, their beſt Intereſt.

They would ſeem very modeſt in concealing their Vertue; while yet they are moſt impudent in diſcloſing their want of Conſcience; while they are ſo preſumptuous toward God, as *to provoke him to his face* by their diſobedience; while they are not aſhamed to wrong and ſcandalize their Brethren by their ill behaviour.

Iſa. 65. 3. Jer. 6. 17. 8. 12.

They would not be uncivil or diſcourteous in thwarting the Mind and pleaſure of their Company; as if in the mean time they might be moſt rude toward God in affronting his Will and Authority; as if any rule of Civility could oblige a Man to forfeit his Salvation; as if it were not rather moſt cruel Diſcourteſie, and barbarous Inhumanity to countenance or encourage any Man in Courſes tending to his Ruine.

They would not be ſingular and uncouth in diſcoſting from the common road, or faſhion of Men; As if it were better to leave the common Duty, than the common Faults of Men; as if Wiſdom and Vertue were ever the moſt vulgar things; as if the way to Heaven were the broadeſt and the moſt beaten way; as if Rarity ſhould abate the price of good things; as if Conſpiracy in Rebellion againſt God might juſtifie or excuſe the Fact; as if it were adviſeable to march to Hell in a troop, or comfortable to lie there for ever among the damned Crew of aſſociates in Wickedneſs.

They cannot endure to be accounted Zealots or *Bigots* in Religion; As if a Man could love or fear God too much; or be over-faithful and careful in ſerving him; As if to be moſt earneſt and ſolicitous (not in promoting our own Fancies, but) in diſcharging our plain Duties could be juſtly reproachable; or were not indeed highly commendable.

Theſe things I may hereafter fully declare; in the mean time it is manifeſt that ſuch a practice is extreamly prejudicial to Religion and Goodneſs; ſo that it may be very uſeful to employ our Meditations upon this *Text* of the *Apoſtle*, which directly doth oppoſe and prohibit it.

The ſame *Text* he otherwhere (in his Second *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*) doth repeat, in the ſame terms (only inſerting a Clauſe more fully explaining his ſenſe) backing his Precept with his own Example; for, We (ſaith he there) did ſo manage the buſineſs of collecting and diſpenſing Alms, as *to avoid that any Man ſhould blame us in this abundance, which is adminiſtred by us; providing for honeſt things, not only in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.*

2 Cor. 8. 21.

The words do imply a Precept of very large extent, and touching a great part of our Duty; even all thereof which is publick and viſible; for which we are accomptable to the World, whereof Man can take any cogniſance; which concerneth all our Speech and Converſation, all our Dealing and Commerce, all our deportment relating to humane Society, civil or ſpiritual.

I ſhall firſt a little conſider its meaning and deſign; then I ſhall propoſe Reaſons and Inducements to its obſervance; then I ſhall declare the Folly of thoſe Principles and Pretences which obſtruct that obſervance.

I. The meaning of it is, that we ſhould have a ſpecial care of our external Demeanor and Converſation, which cometh under the view and obſervation of Men; that it be exempted from any Offence or Blame, yea, that it be comely and commendable.

Ἀμέμπτοι. Phil. 2. 15. Ἀνέγκλητοι. Col. 1. 22.

The

The Terms, in which it is expreſſed, are notably emphatical: We are directed προνοεῖν, *to provide*, to uſe a Providence and Forecaſt in the Caſe: E'er we undertake any Deſign, we ſhould deliberate with our ſelves, and conſider on what Theatre we ſhall act, what Perſons will be Spectators, what Conceits our Practice may raiſe in them, and what Influence probably it will have on them. We ſhould not ruſh on into the publick view, with a precipitant Raſhneſs, or blind Negligence, or contemptuous Diſregard, not caring who ſtandeth in our way, who marketh what we do, what Conſequence our Proceeding may have on the ſcore of its being publick and viſible: We ſhould adviſe before-hand, lay our Buſineſs, and on ſet Purpoſe order our Behaviour with a regard to thoſe, to whoſe Sight and Notice we expoſe it; foreſeeing how our Actions may affect or incline them. So we muſt provide; what Things? καλὰ, Things fair and handſome; Things not only good, innocent, and inoffenſive to the ſight of Men; but goodly, pleaſant, and acceptable to well-diſpoſed Beholders; ſuch as our *Apoſtle* doth otherwhere recommend, when he chargeth us to regard, ὅσα σεμνὰ, *whatever things are venerable*, ὅσα προσφιλῆ, *whatever things are lovely*, ὅσα εὔφημα, *whatever things are of good report*, εἴ τις ἔπαινος —— *whatever things are laudable*? and when he doth exhort us *to walk* εὐσχημόνως, *handſomly* and decently, in a comely Garb and Faſhion of Life: This may add an Obligation to ſome things not directly preſcribed by God, which yet may ſerve to adorn Religion; but it cannot detract any thing from what God hath commanded: It doth comprehend all Inſtances of Piety and Vertue, practicable before Men; it certainly doth exclude all commiſſion of Sin, and omiſſion of Duty; for that nothing can be fair or handſome, which is ugly in God's ſight, which doth not ſuit to his Holy Will.

Phil. 4. 8.

Rom. 13. 13. 1 Theſſ. 4. 12.

Such things we muſt provide, ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων, *before all Men*; not only before ſome Men; to whom we bear a particular reſpect, of whom we ſtand in awe, upon whom we have a deſign; but univerſally before all Men; as having a due conſideration of all thoſe, upon whom our Deportment may have influence; not deſpiſing or diſregarding the obſervation of the meaneſt or moſt inconſiderable Perſon whatever.

But in this Practice, to avoid Miſapprehenſions, we muſt diſtinguiſh; for it is not required, that we ſhould do all things openly, nor intended that we ſhould do any thing vainly; but that we ſhould act conſtantly according to the Nature and Reaſon of things, with upright and pure Intention: The *Apoſtle* doth not mean, that in our Practice we ſhould reſemble the *Phariſees*, whom our Lord reproveth for *doing their Alms before Men*, for loving *to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues*, for *doing all their Works to be ſeen of Men*; performing thoſe Acts of Piety openly *in the Corners of the Street*, which ſhould have been done ſecretly *in the Cloſet*; and ſo doing them out of Vanity, and ambitious Deſign, to procure the good Opinion and Praiſe of Men: He doth not intend, that we ſhould aſſume a formal Garb of ſingular Vertue; that we ſhould aim to ſeem better than we are, counterfeiting any point of Religion, or Vertue; that we ſhould affect to appear even as good as we are, expoſing all our Piety to common view: That we ſhould *ſound a Trumpet before us*, making an Oſtentation of any good Deeds, catching at Reputation, or Applauſe for them; that we ſhould do any commendable thing chiefly to obtain the good Opinion of the World, or to eſcape its Cenſure; infinitely far it was from the *Apoſtle*'s Intention, that we ſhould be *like thoſe whited Sepulchers, which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens Bones and all Uncleanneſs*: that is, like thoſe *Phariſees*, who *did outwardly appear Righteous, but within were full of Hypocriſie and Iniquity*: No;

Matt. 6. 1, 3. Matt. 23. 5.

Matt. 6. 2.

Matt. 23. 27, 28.

In ſome Caſes we muſt be reſerved, and keep our Vertue cloſe to our ſelves; and ever under a fair Shew there muſt be a real Subſtance of Good, together with an honeſt intention of Heart; a good Conſcience muſt always lie at the bottom of a good Converſation; the outſide muſt be good, but the beſt ſide muſt be inward; we muſt endeavour to ſanctifie our Life and Converſation, but we muſt eſpecially labour to purifie our Hearts and Affections.

Τὸ σεμνὸν ἁπλόσως— Τὸ εὔφημον ἀφοφπ. *Ant.* 1. §. 9. 2. §. 5.

Join the Precept with others duly limiting it, and it doth import, that with pure Sincerity, and unaffected Simplicity (void of any ſiniſter, or ſordid Deſign) we ſhould in all Places, upon all Occaſions, in all Matters carefully diſcharge that part of our Duty which is publick, according to its Nature, Seaſon, and Exigency, that is publickly; not abſtaining from the practice of thoſe good Deeds, which cannot otherwiſe than openly be well performed; or the conſpicuous performance whereof is abſolutely needful in regard to God's Law and the ſatisfaction of our Conſcience, is plainly ſerviceable to the Glory of God, is very conducible to the Edification of our Neighbour, or which may be uſeful to good Purpoſes concurrent with thoſe principal Ends: We ſhould, as *good Trees*, from a deep root of true Piety, in due *ſeaſon* naturally, as it were ſhoot forth good Fruits, not only pleaſant to the ſight, but ſavoury to the taſte, and wholſome for uſe; as St. *Paul*, who, as he ſaith of himſelf, that he *did provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men*, ſo he alſo doth affirm, that *his Rejoicing was this, the Teſtimony of his Conſcience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity— he had his Converſation in the World.*

Matt. 7. 17. Luke 6. 44. Pſal. 1, 3. 2 Cor. 8. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

There are indeed ſome Duties, or Works of Piety and Vertue, the Nature whereof directeth, that in the practice of them we ſhould be reſerved; ſuch as thoſe wherein the World is not immediately concerned, and which may with beſt advantage be tranſacted between God and our own Souls; as private Devotion, meditation on God's Word and Will, the diſcuſſion of our Conſciences, voluntary Exerciſes of Penitence, and the like; ſuch alſo be thoſe, wherein the intervention or notice of few Perſons is required; as Deeds of particular Charity in diſpenſing Alms, good Advice, friendly Reproof; the which ſort of Duties our Lord hath taught us to perform *inſecret*, or as cloſely as we may; ſtudiouſly keeping our Obſervance of them from the Eyes of Men; thereby aſſuring our Sincerity to our ſelves, and guarding our Practice from any Taint of Vanity, or Suſpicion of Hypocriſie; as alſo in ſome Caſes avoiding to cauſe Prejudice or Offence to our Neighbours: *Take heed* (ſaith our Lord) *that ye do not your Alms before Men*; and *Thou when thou prayeſt, enter into thy Cloſet*; and *Thou when thou faſteſt, anoint thine Head, and waſh thy Face, that thou appear not unto Men to faſt*; and, *If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone.*

Ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ. Matt. 6. 4, 6. Mat. 6. 1. Matt. 6. 6. Matt. 6. 17. Matt. 18. 15.

But there are divers other Duties, the diſcharge whereof neceſſarily is notorious and viſible; the Publick being the Stage on which they are to be acted; the tranſaction of them demanding the entercourſe of many Perſons, who are the Objects or Inſtruments of them, or are ſomewiſe concerned in them: Such is that negative Duty, of a general Nature, and vaſt Comprehenſion, which we may call Innocence: that is a total abſtinence from Sin, or forbearance to tranſgreſs any divine Command; which is a part of *Job*'s Character, *That Man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eſchewed Evil*; the which Duty bieng to be practiſed at all times in every place, cannot avoid being obſervable.

Pſal. 34. 14. Job 1. 1, 2, 3.

Such

Such are alſo divers poſitive Duties; for ſuch is the Profeſſion of our Faith in God, and acknowledgment of his heavenly Truth, revealed in the Goſpel of our bleſſed *Saviour*; which is ſtiled *confeſſing our Lord before Men*, and is (as St. *Paul* telleth us) indiſpenſably requiſite to Salvation. Rom. 10. 10.

Such is joining in that publick Adoration, whereby the Honour and Authority of God are upheld in the World, with ſeemly Expreſſions of Reverence; the which is to be performed ſolemnly, and (as the Holy *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh) *in the midſt of the Congregation.* Pſa. 99. 5. 132. 7. Pſal. 22. 22.

Such is Zeal in vindication of God's Honour, when occaſion requireth, from blaſphemous Aſperſion, or from ſcandalous Offences againſt it.

Such are Juſtice, Equity, Fidelity, and Ingenuity in our Dealings; Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Patience, Kindneſs, and Courteſie in our Converſe; Peaceableneſs in our Carriage, and charitable Beneficence; the Objects whereof are moſt general, according to thoſe *Apoſtolical* Precepts, *That our Moderation* (or our Equity and Ingenuity) *be known unto all Men*; that we *ſhew all Meekneſs to all Men*; that we *muſt not ſtrive*; *but be gentle unto all Men*; that we *be patient toward all Men*; that we *purſue Peace with all Men*; that *As we have opportunity we ſhould do good unto all Men*; ſhould *abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men*; ſhould *ever follow that which is good both among our ſelves, and to all Men*; ſhould *liberally diſtribute to the Saints, and to all Men*; in performing which ſo general Duties, how can a Man paſs *incognito*, how can he ſo deal with all Men indiſcernibly? Phil. 4. 5. Tit. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 24. 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Heb. 12. 14. Rom. 12. 18. Gal. 6. 10. 1 Theſſ. 3. 12. 1 Theſſ. 5. 15. 2 Cor. 9. 13.

Such are likewiſe Gravity and Modeſty in our Behaviour; Sweetneſs, Soberneſs, Aptneſs to profit and edifie the Hearers in our Diſcourſe; Moderation and Temperance in our corporeal Enjoyments: Induſtry in our Buſineſs and the Works of our Calling, integrity in the Management of any Office or Truſt committed to us; a conſtant Practice of which Vertues is not only injoined to us as our particular Duty, but for publick Example. 2 Tim. 4. 12. Tit. 2. 4, 7.

Such are ſeaſonable defence of the Truth, and oppoſing of Error; the commendation of Vertue, and reprehenſion of notorious Sin, with the like.

Such things muſt be practiſed, becauſe indiſpenſable Duties; but they cannot be done out of ſight, or barring the obſervation of Men; they do involve Publickneſs; they carry a Light and Luſtre with them, attracting all Eyes to regard them; it is as impoſſible to conceal them as to hide the Sun from all the World; or to *conceal a City that is ſet upon a Hill*; for *nothing* (as St. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith) *doth render a Man ſo illuſtrious, although he ten thouſand times would be hid, as an open practice of Vertue.* Matt. 5. 14.

Οὐδὲν γὰρ ὕτως ἐπίσημον ἄνδρα ποιεῖ, κἂν μυριάκις λανθάνειν βούληται, ὡς ἀρετῆς ἐπίδειξις. Chryſ. in Matt. 5. 16.

Wherefore *the Works of Mercy* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *the Affection of Charity, the Sanctity of Godlineſs, the Incorruptneſs of Chaſtity, the Moderation of Sobriety, theſe are perpetually to be held, whether we are in the publick, or at home; whether before Men, or in the Cloſet, whether we ſpeak, or keep ſilence.*

Opera miſericordiæ, affectus charitatis, ſanctitas pietatis, incorruptio caſtitatis, modeſtia ſobrietatis, ſemper hæc tenenda ſunt; ſive cùm in publico ſumus, ſive cùm in domo; ſive ante homines, ſive in cubiculo; ſive loquentes, ſive tacentes, Aug. *in Ep.* 1. Joh. *Tract.* 8.

In the practice of them, 'tis true, we mainly ſhould reſpect the approving our Conſcience to God, with expectation of our Recompence from him: not being much concerned in the Judgment or Pleaſure of Men; purely conſidered in themſelves; not aiming at any Intereſt of Credit or Profit from them, as a Reward of our Work; *We ought* (as St. *Auſtin* ſaith) while we do good, *to be ſeen, but we ought not to do it, that we may be ſeen; the end of our Joy, the bound of our Comfort ſhould not be there; ſo that we ſhould think our*

— non cum fama ſed cùm rerum natura deliberandum eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 81.

1 Cor. 4. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 4, 5. Gal. 1. 10.

Si times ſpectatores non habebis imitatores; debes ergò videri, ſed non ad hoc debes facere, ut videaris, non ibi debet eſſe finis gaudii tui, non ibi terminus lætitiæ tuæ, ut putes te totum fructum conſecutum eſſe boni operis, cùm viſus fueris atque laudatus. Ibid.

ſelves to have obtained the whole fruit of a good work, when we have been ſeen and commended: No, *whatever we do,* we ſhould (as the *Apoſtle* directeth) do it, *as the Servants of Chriſt, doing the Will of God from the Heart; doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto Men; knowing that of the Lord we ſhall receive the reward of the Inheritance.*

Eph. 6. 6. Col. 3. 23, 24.

Yet nothing in the mean time ſhould hinder us from performing ſuch neceſſary Duties; ſtrictly and exactly, with our moſt diligent Care and Endeavour, even in that Light, which their Nature doth carry in it.

How much ſoever of our Vertue or Piety out of Humility, or Modeſty we may conceal; yet we muſt be careful of diſcovering any Vice or Irreligion; either by notoriouſly committing any thing forbidden by God, or omitting any thing commanded by him.

This we ſhould not do upon any Terms, upon any Pretence whatever; No wicked Faſhion ſhould engage us, no bad Example ſhould inveagle us, no Favour of Men ſhould allure us, no Terror ſhould ſcare us thereto; we ſhould not out of Fear, out of Shame, out of Complaiſance, out of affected Prudence, or politick Deſign; out of deference to the Quality, Dignity, or Authority of any Perſon; out of regard to any Man's Deſire, or Pleaſure; We ſhould not to decline Offence, Envy, Blame, Reproach, Ill-treatment, or upon any ſuch Accompt, comply in any ſinful Practice, wave any Duty, neglect any Seaſon of performing a good Deed, whereby we may glorifie God, or edifie our Neighbour, or promote the welfare of our own Soul.

To ſuch a Practice, according to the intent of St. *Paul's* Injunction, we are obliged; and thereto we may be induced by divers Conſiderations; particularly by thoſe which we ſhall now propoſe.

Bona conſcientia prodire vult & conſpici, ipſas nequitiæ tenebras timet. Sen. *Ep.* 27.

1. We may conſider, that the Publick is the proper, natural, and due Place of Goodneſs: It ſhould dwell in the Light, it ſhould walk freely and boldly every-where, it ſhould expoſe it ſelf to open view, that it may receive from rational Creatures its due Approbation, Reſpect and Praiſe; it by publickneſs is advanced, and the more it doth appear, the more beautiful, the more pleaſant, the more uſeful it is; yielding the fairer Luſtre, the greater Influence, the better Effects; thereby diffuſing and propagating it ſelf, becoming exemplary, inſtructive and admonitive; drawing Lovers and Admirers to it; exciting and encouraging Men to embrace it; wherefore it is very abſurd that it ſhould ſculk or ſneak; it is a great damage to the Publick, that it ſhould retire from common notice.

Omne malum aut timore aut pudore naturæ perfudit. Tert. *Apol. cap.* 1. Job 24. 13—17.

On the other hand, it is proper for Wickedneſs never to appear, or to ſhew its Head in view; it ſhould be confined to Darkneſs and Solitude, under guard of its natural Keepers, Shame and Fear; it ſhould be exterminated from all Converſation among rational Creatures, and baniſhed to the infernal Shades: Publickneſs doth augment and aggravate it; the more it is ſeen, the more ugly, the more loathſome, the more noxious it is; its odious Shape being diſcloſed, its noiſome Steams being diſperſed, its peſtilent Effects being conveyed thereby.

Rom. 13. 12. Eph. 5. 11.

Wherefore to ſmother Vertue (that fair Child of Light) in privacy, and to vent Sin (*the works of darkneſs*) openly, is quite to tranſplace things out of their natural Situation and Order; according to which we are taught by our *Lord*, that *He that doth truth cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be manifeſt*; and by St. *Paul*, that *Every one, who doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, leſt his Deeds ſhould be reproved*; So indeed it is, and will be, where Conſcience retaineth its due Sway and Force; were a due Reſpect and Reverence are preſerved for Goodneſs.

John 3. 21. Eph. 5. 13.

As

As that any Good cometh from detection of Sin, is an accidental Advantage; ſo that any Miſchief doth ever follow the Manifeſtation of Vertue, is an unnatural Abuſe, the which may well be prevented: There can be no Danger of acting any good moſt evidently, if we do withal act ſincerely, having purified our Hearts from diſhoneſt Intention, and from ambitious Vanity; the fear of which ſhould not wholly drive Vertue under the Hatches, and bring Vice upon the Stage. But,

2. We ſhould conſider, that we cannot really, in any competent or tolerable meaſure be good Men, without approving our ſelves ſuch in our Converſation before Men.

Whatever may be pretended, it commonly doth happen, and it ever is to be ſuſpected that the inviſible Piety, which is not accompanied with viſible Conſcientiouſneſs, is falſe, or is no Piety at all; or that they who have little Care and Conſcience to ſerve God publickly, have much leſs to ſerve him privately; or that ſuch as betray a ſcandalous Negligence of their Ways, will hardly maintain a careful Watch over their Hearts; for the ſame Cauſes (be it profane Infidelity, or looſeneſs of Principles, or ſupine Incogitancy, or Sloth, or Stupidity) which diſpoſe them to diſregard God and his Laws before the World, more effectually will incline them to neglect God, and forget their Duty by themſelves, where beſide their own Conſcience, there is no Witneſs, no Judge, no Cenſor to encourage, or reproach them: But admit it poſſible, and put caſe, that ſometimes the Heart and Converſation may not run parallel; that a Man may better govern his interiour Thoughts and Affections, than he doth manage his exteriour Behaviour and Actions, that a Man ſecretly may cleave to God, although he ſeemeth openly to deſert him; yet this will not ſuffice to conſtitute, or denominate a good Man; becauſe much of Goodneſs, as we have ſhewed, even the nobler half thereof (that part whereby God is moſt glorified, and whereby the World is moſt benefitted) doth lie in open and viſible Practice; that Vertue therefore muſt be very imperfect, that Obedience muſt be very lame, which is deficient in ſo great a part. Jam. 2. 10.

As there can be no fair pretence to Goodneſs, where ſo little thereof is conſpicuous; ſo there can be no real Integrity thereof, where ſo much of Duty is wanting.

Our Lord hath taught us, that *Every Tree is known by its Fruit*; and, St. *James* ſaith, that *Faith is ſhewed by Works*; and ſo it is, that a Man can hardly be good in any reaſonable degree without appearing ſuch; Impiety may, but Piety cannot be quite concealed: As Gold may be counterfeited for all is not Gold that gliſtereth) yet true Gold always doth look like Gold; ſo although bad Men ſometimes may ſeem good, yet good Men alſo muſt ſeem ſuch, appearing in their own native Temper and Luſtre. Luke 6. 44. Jam. 2. 18.

Goodneſs cannot be diſguiſed in the ſhape of Evil, becauſe Simplicity and Innocence are eſſential Ingredients of it; any mixture of notorious Sin, any viſible neglect of Duty aſſuring (yea formerly making) a want of it, or a real Defect therein: It may be daubed with falſe Aſperſions, it may be dimmed by the Breath of unjuſt, and uncharitable Cenſures; but wiping them off, its natural Hue certainly will appear.

Wherefore if we would ſatisfie our ſelves in our own Conſciences, or juſtifie our ſelves to others, that we are truly good, we muſt (without Partiality, or diſtinguiſhing between publick and private) like the Holy *Pſalmiſt*, *have reſpect unto all God's Commandments*; we, like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, muſt *walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord, blameleſs*; we muſt, like *David*, *accompliſh God's Will*; we muſt obſerve St. *Paul's* Rule, *to abſtain*, ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ, *from* both *every kind of evil, and every bad appearance*. But farther, (Numb. 15. 39, 40. Pſal. 119. 6. Luke 1. 6. Ποιεῖν πάντα τὰ θελήματα. Acts 13. 22. 1 Theſſ. 5. 23.

3. A

3. A great care of our good Behaviour before Men is neceſſary in regard to Almighty God; whoſe juſt Intereſt is preſerved, whoſe due Homage is payed, whoſe Honour is promoted thereby; the ſame being greatly prejudiced and impaired by the contrary defailance.

It is a clear point of Juſtice towards God, as to render all Obedience to him, ſo particularly that which conſiſteth in an open Acknowledgment and Service of him; for as he made and doth preſerve not only the Heart, but the Tongue, the Members, the whole Man, ſo all muſt concur in rendring their Tribute of Reverence and Service to him.

Rom. 12. 1. 1 Cor. 10. 31.

The *Apoſtle* doth preſcribe, that *whatever we do, we ſhould do all to the Glory of God*; and well he might, ſeeing that to glorifie God is indeed to execute the main deſign of our Creation, to apply our Faculties to their beſt uſe, to atchieve the moſt proper and moſt excellent Work, whereof we are capable; to do that, which is the worthieſt and happieſt Employment of Angels, which all the Company of Heaven with moſt ardent Deſire, with moſt zealous Ambition, with reſtleſs endeavour doth purſue: And this we cannot better, we cannot otherwiſe do, than by an apparent good Converſation. For,

He that apparently in all his Actions maketh conſcience of obeying God's Laws, thereby doth evidence his firm Perſuaſion concerning the Exiſtence and Providence of God, doth adhere to him againſt all Adverſaries of Piety, and all Temptations to Rebellion; doth avow his Sovereign Majeſty and Authority; doth yield him due Veneration and Obedience; doth ſhew right Apprehenſions of him, and juſt Affections towards him; implying that he doth moſt highly eſteem him, doth moſt heartily love him, doth chiefly dread him, doth repoſe his Truſt and Hope in him for all his Happineſs; hath a great opinion of his Wiſdom, a great awe of his Power, a great ſenſe of his Goodneſs; the which Practice is in it ſelf a direct and formal Glorification of God, in his own Perſon.

He alſo thereby doth farther promote the Glory of God, inſtructing, exciting, and encouraging others to the like practice of deferring Reſpect and Service to God; for naturally Men have ſuch a Capacity, ſuch Aptitude, ſuch Proclivity to Religion (or to the Acknowledgment and Worſhip of their Maker) that when they behold others ſeriouſly and earneſtly purſuing it, they are eaſily drawn to conſpire therein; eſpecially thoſe who are not utterly perverted and corrupted by ill Cuſtom.

Ἀρετῆς ἄσκησις τίμιον μὲν κτῆμα τοῖς ἔχουσι, ἡδὺ δὲ θέαμα τοῖς ὁρῶσι. Baſ. Ep. 42.

Ὅταν γὰρ ἀπίστου, &c. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. θ. (p. 524.)

And whereas good Converſation hath a native Beauty affecting Beholders with Delight, whereas the Fruits of Vertue have a pleaſing Sweetneſs, grateful to all who taſte them; Men from that Sight and that Senſe, will preſently be moved to commend the Wiſdom, and to bleſs the Goodneſs of him, who was pleaſed to inſtitute ſo excellent a Religion, to enact ſo beneficial Laws, to preſcribe ſo wholſome Duties to us: For, *when* (ſaith the moſt divine *Father*) *an Infidel ſhall ſee thee a Believer to be* κατεσταλμένον——*ſtaunch, ſober, orderly, he will be aſtoni'd, and will ſay, in truth great is the God of Chriſtians! What Men hath he made? What Perſons, out of what Perſons hath he made them? how from Men hath he made them Angels? If one abuſe them they do not rail; if one ſmite them, they do not reſent; if one injure them, they pray for him that doth the Offence; they know not to remember ill Turns, they skill not to be vain, they have not learnt to lie, they cannot abide to forſwear, or rather to ſwear at all, but ſooner would chuſe to have their Tongue cut out, than to let an Oath ſlip out of their Mouth.*

So may we really glorifie God; and otherwiſe than by open Practice we cannot do it; for Glory doth require a publick Stage; it implying (as

(as *Seneca* ſaith) *the conſent of many worthy Perſons* declaring their Eſteem; it being, as *Cicero* defineth it, *the agreeing Praiſe of good Men, with an incorrupted Vote, judging well of an excellent Vertue.*

Gloria conſenſum, multorum exigit—— Conſentire in hoc plures inſignes & præſtantes viri debent, ut claritas ſit. Sen. Ep. 102.

Gloria eſt conſentiens laus bonorum in corrupta voce benè judicantium de excellente virtute. Cic. 3. *Tuſc init.*

Gloria eſt frequens de aliqua fama cum laude. Cic. *de Inv.* 2. 39.

Wherefore toward our being enabled to glorifie God, two things muſt concur; that we be good Men, and that we be openly ſuch.

That we be good Men, becauſe otherwiſe our Commendation will have no worth, or weight; for *Praiſe is not comely in the mouth of Sinners*: It is no Ornament to be commended by ill Men, to whoſe Words little regard is due, little truſt can be given.

Non eſt ſpecioſa laus in ore peccatoris. Ecclus. 15. 9.

That we be good openly, avowing God in Practice conducing to his Honour: otherwiſe no Glory can accrue to him from our Goodneſs: We may ſerve God, and pleaſe him in private; but we cannot by that Service glorifie him; at leaſt at preſent and here in this World: It is true the cloſeſt Piety will yield Glory to God at the laſt, *when our Lord ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that believe*; but to deſign ſuch a future Glorification of God is not enough; it is our Duty to glorifie God now, that we may be rewarded for it, and that he may requite us with Glory hereafter. 2 Theſſ. 1. 10.

God himſelf telleth us in the *Pſalm, Whoſo offereth Praiſe, he glorifieth me.* And how can Praiſe be offered, or to what purpoſe will it be offered otherwiſe than apparently, either in Word or Deed, by oral or by real Expreſſion, to the Ears, or to the Eyes of Men, ſo as to occaſion in them the Production of worthy Conceptions and due Affections towards God? In ſuch a manner the *holy Man* did offer it, who ſaid, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren, in the midſt of the Congregation I will praiſe thee; I will praiſe the Lord with my whole Heart, in the Aſſembly of the Upright, and in the Congregation*; He did it ſometimes with his Mouth, which is a notable part of our Converſation; but we may do it continually by our Life; for, *He* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *who praiſeth God with his Tongue, cannot do that always; but he that praiſeth God by his Manners can always do it.* Pſal. 50. 23. Pſal. 22. 22. Pſal. 111. 1. 107. 32. 109. 30.

Qui Deum laudat lingua, non ſemper poteſt; qui moribus Deum laudat, ſemper poteſt. Aug. *in* 1 *Ep.* Joh. *Tr.* 8.

This Motive is by the great Maſters of our Chriſtian Practice frequently urged; for

Saint *Paul* wiſheth the *Philippians to be filled with the fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, unto the praiſe and glory of God*; He prayeth for the *Theſſalonians*, that *God would fulfil all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt might be glorified in them*: He particularly doth incite the *Corinthians* to Works of Charity, that *by that miniſtration* Men might be induced to *glorifie God*, rendring him thankful Praiſe for their beneficial Obedience. Phil. 1. 11. 2 Theſſ. 1. 11,— 2 Cor. 9. 11,—13.

St. *Peter* likewiſe doth exhort all Chriſtians *to have their Converſation honeſt among the Gentiles, that they might by their good Works, which they ſhould behold, glorifie God in the day of viſitation*, (that is perhaps, when they carefully do view, and reflect on them.) 1 Pet. 2. 12. Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς.

Our Lord himſelf thus chargeth his Diſciples, *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven*; they did obſerve his Command, and the Effect did follow, many being converted to God no leſs by the radiant Integrity of their Life, than by the perſuaſive Efficacy of their Doctrine: and, *In this* (ſaith our *Lord* again) *is my Father glorified, if ye bear much Fruit?* what Fruit was Matt. 5. 16. Chryſ. John 15. 8.

that?

that? what but of good Works viſible to the Eye, and perceptible to the taſte; otherwiſe how could Men thence find Cauſe to glorifie God?

In fine, this is declared to be the peculiar Deſign of our Religion, or of
1 Pet. 2. 9. the whole Chriſtian Inſtitution; to this end we are made *a choſen Generation, a royal Prieſthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People, that we ſhould ſhew forth the Praiſes* (or Vertues) *of him, who hath called us out of Darkneſs to his marvellous Light*; not only by our Profeſſion, but in our Practice, declaring his Goodneſs.

On the other hand, by ſtifling our Vertue and Conſcience, in an open compliance with Sin, or neglect of our Duty, we greatly ſhall diſhonour
Tit. 1. 16. God; for thereby in effect we deny him, and deſert him; we injure his Majeſty, and diſclaim our Allegiance to him; we intimate our mean Opinion of him, and ſmall Affection to him; we betray our want of Reverence to his Excellency, of Dread to his Greatneſs, of Love to his Goodneſs; of Hope in his Promiſes, and gracious Overtures of Mercy; of Fear in regard to his ſevere Juſtice and fierce Menaces: ſo immediately we diſhonour him, and we thereby alſo do countenance Diſreſpect and Diſobedience to him: And our Behaviour tendeth to produce, or to confirm the like irreligious Diſpoſitions of Mind, and impious Practices in others; ſo that with horrible Diſengenuity we croſs the Deſign of our Creation, and violate our greateſt Obligations toward our Maker.

Indeed what greater Affront, or more heinous Indignity can we offer to
Tit. 1. 16. God, than openly before the World, *by* the moſt real Expreſſions of *our Works, to deny* and diſown *him*; than to be notoriouſly aſhamed, or afraid to avow him for our Lord and Maſter; than to expreſs no Senſe of our Duty to him, no Reverence of his Authority, no Gratitude for his Benefits to us; than viſibly to prefer any other Conſideration or worldly Advantage before a Regard to his Will and Pleaſure?

In this open Sin doth outgo private Wickedneſs, and putteth down even the worſt Hypocriſie (beſide its own) that it not only offendeth God, but ſorely woundeth his Honour, and expoſeth his glorious Name to Contempt; by which Conſideration ſuch Miſcarriages are frequently aggravated in Holy Scripture: So in the Prophets God complaineth of his People, for having by their ſcandalous Crimes *profaned his holy Name among the Hea-*
Ezek. 36. 21—
Iſa. 52. 2.
Rom. 2. 23.
2 Sam. 12, 14. *then:* So St. *Paul* expoſtulateth with the *Jew, Thou that boaſteſt of the Law, through breaking the Law diſhonoureſt thou God?* ſo *Nathan* told *David*, that God would puniſh him, *becauſe by his bad Deed he had given great occaſion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme.* But.

4. We ſhould be careful of our good Behaviour in the ſight of Men, that we may thereby maintain the Dignity and Repute of our Chriſtian Profeſſion, which by our naughty or negligent Demeanour will be much diſparaged and diſgraced.

Moſt evident it is to Reaſon, that a viſible Practice, conformable to the Rules of our Religion, cannot otherwiſe than exceedingly commend and grace it; for how can the goodneſs of a Rule more ſurely obtain its due Commendation, than from its being applied to obſervable Practice and Experience.

Aſſuredly Charity, Meekneſs, Humility, Patience, Sobriety, Diſcretion, and all Chriſtian Vertues, as in themſeves they are very amiable and venerable to all Men, as they yield great Benefit and much Pleaſure to thoſe whom their Conſequences do touch; ſo they do ingratiate the Law which preſcribeth them, they bring Eſteem to the Principles, whence they are derived;
Rom. 14. 18. *He* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, is* both *acceptable to God, and approved of Men*, as the Follower of a moſt excellent Rule.

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We may alſo conſider, that a conſpicuous Practice, according to our Religion, is a demonſtrative Proof, that we do ſeriouſly and firmly embrace it, or that we are heartily and ſteadily perſuaded of its Truth; which is no ſmall credit to any Profeſſion, arguing that it hath a good foundation in Reaſon, apt to bottom and ſuſtain a ſolid Faith.

And as thereby we pregnantly do evidence, that we our ſelves do highly value the noble Privileges, the excellent Promiſes, the precious Rewards exhibited in the Goſpel; ſo we thereby do breed a like eſteem in others; upon whom the authority of Men apparently Vertuous and Conſcientious infallibly will have a forcible influence.

Such a Practice will have a great ſtroke toward evincing the truth and reality, the perfect excellency, the notable ſtrength and efficacy of our Religion; plainly ſhewing, that it is not a meer Name, an idle Pretence, a weak Fancy, a dry Speculation, a chimærical Dream; but a vigorous and maſculine Principle, able to produce moſt worthy Fruits of ſubſtantial Goodneſs, *profitable to Men*; conducible to our own welfare, and to the benefit of others.

As gallant Actions, becoming a noble Rank, elevated above the vulgar level, do illuſtrate and dignify Nobility it ſelf; ſo doth a worthy Converſation, beſeeming our high Station in the heavenly Kingdom, our near Alliances to God, thoſe ſplendid Titles and glorious Privileges aſſigned to every faithful Chriſtian in the Evangelical Charter, render our State admirable, and make it ſeem an excellent advantage to be a Chriſtian.

Hence in the *Apoſtolical* Writings an obſervance of the Evangelical Laws is ſo much and often enforced by this Conſideration; for upon this account we are exhorted to a careful diſcharge of our Duty, that *we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; We are urged *to have our Converſation worthy of the Goſpel*; to *walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith we are called*, to behave our ſelves *as worthily becometh Saints* (that is, Perſons inſtituted in ſo Holy a Religion, and deſigned to ſo peculiar excellency in Vertue) to *walk as Children of the Light*, that is, of Truth and Knowledge revealed from Heaven) to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto his Kingdom and Glory*; *worthy of the Lord, unto all well-pleaſing, being fruitful in every good work*; the which enforcements of Duty do imply a viſible Practice, producing the viſible effects of Ornament and Credit to our Religion, recommending it to the Minds and Conſciences of Men.

Tit. 2. 10. Phil. 1. 27. Eph. 4. 1. Eph. 5. 3. Rom. 16. 2. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Theſſ. 2. 12. Col. 1. 10.

Contrariwiſe, the defect of good Converſation before Men in Chriſtians, is upon divers accounts diſgraceful to our Religion. For,

It tempteth Men to judge, that we our ſelves do not heartily believe its Truth, or value its Worth; That we do not approve its Doctrine for reaſonable, or take its advantages for conſiderable; or deem the name and ſtate of a Chriſtian to be honourable; ſeeing we are not concerned to own them, or do not care to engage our reputation in avowing and abetting them in that way, which doth beſt ſignifie our Mind and Meaning: For Men certainly will judge of our ſenſe, not ſo much by what we ſay, as from what we do; not by our verbal Profeſſion or Pretence, but from our Practice, as the ſureſt indication of our Heart.

* Εἰ δέ τις ἐλεγχθῇ πράξαι τι ἄνομον, ὁ τοιοῦτος οὐ μόνον ἑαυτὸν ἔβλαψεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βλασφημίαν παρεσκεύασε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. Conſt. Ap. 2. 8.

Wherefore when they hear us to confeſs our Faith, and ſee us act like Infidels, they will be forced to eſteem us either for ſubdolous Hypocrites, or for inconſiſtent Fools; who aſſume the name of Chriſtians, and pretend to great advantages thence, yet in effect do not mind, or regard them; highly commending the Rules of our Religion, but not at all obſerving them;

greatly admiring the Example of our Saviour, but not caring to imitate it; deſcribing Heaven for a moſt happy place, but not ſtriving to get thither, in the ſole way, which our Lord preſcribeth, of faithful and diligent obedience to his Precepts.

Seeing, I ſay, this repugnance between our Profeſſion and our Practice, will induce Men to charge us with Hypocriſie and Folly; and if the Profeſſors be taken for Counterfeits or Fools, the profeſſion it ſelf will hardly 'ſcape from being held Impoſture, or Folly.

Our Religion at leaſt will thence be expoſed to the Cenſures of being no better than a fond Device, and a barren Notion, unpracticable, ineffectual, and inſignificant to any good purpoſe.

The viſible misbehaviour, I ſay, of Chriſtians will aſſuredly derive obloquy and reproach on Chriſtianity, if not as bad, yet as vain, impotent, impertinent, and uſeleſs; eſpecially thoſe who are diſaffected to it, will hence take advantage to inſult upon it with contemptuous Scorn; to what, will they ſay, do your fine Rules ſerve? What effects do your glorious hopes produce? where are the fruits of that holy Faith, and heavenly Doctrine, which you ſo extol and magnifie?

Whereas alſo bad Converſation commonly doth not only deprive Men of the Benefits which our Religion promiſeth, but doth carry with it hurtful fruits; Men that ſee or feel them will be apt to impute them to Religion:

If a Chriſtian be unjuſt, cenſorious, factious, any-wiſe offenſive or troubleſome, although Irreligion be the cauſe of ſuch things, yet Religion muſt bear the blame, and they preſently exclaim,

Quantum religio potuit ſuadere malorum.

Whence St. *Paul* (who was a powerful Inſtructor doth impreſs Matters of Duty by the moſt proper Motives) doth often, and upon all occaſions urge this Conſideration; He chargeth us *to give no offence in any thing, that the Miniſtery* (or Evangelical diſpenſation) *be not blamed*, or expoſed to the cenſure of any captious *Momus*; He biddeth us to forbear harſh Judgment, and all uncharitable Dealing, that *our good be not evil ſpoken of?* He preſſeth the diſcharge of our Duty in each Calling and Relation, that by neglect thereof the Goſpel be not defamed; *Let* (ſaith he) *as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God, and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed*; and, *Let Women be diſcreet, chaſte, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Huſbands, that the word of God be not blaſphemed*; and, *I will that younger Women marry, bear Children, guide the Houſe* (ſo as) *to give no occaſion to the Adverſary* (that is, to Perſons diſaffected to Chriſtianity) *to ſpeak reproachfully* (of it?) which Diſcourſe, by clear parity of Reaſon, may be applied to any other State, or Relation.

2 Cor. 6. 3. Ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ.

Rom. 14. 16.

1 Tim. 6. 1.

Tit. 2. 5.

1 Tim. 5. 14.

Now ſeriouſly what greater Miſchief can we do, what heavier Guilt may we contract, than by working diſhonour to God's adorable Name, than by caſting reproach on God's heavenly Truth, than by drawing a ſcandal on that holy Religion, which the Son of God came down from Heaven to eſtabliſh, for the glory of God, and ſalvation of Mankind? Surely next after directly blaſpheming God, and defying Religion with our own Mouths, the next Crime is to make others to do ſo, or in effect to do it by their profane Tongues.

Rom 2. 24. δι' ὑμᾶς.

There remain divers Arguments of very great Moment, which the time will not ſuffer me to urge; and therefore I muſt reſerve them to another occaſion.

SER-

SERMON XXXIII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

I Have formerly diſcourſed upon this Apoſtolical Precept; and having declared the meaning of it (briefly importing, that we ſhould have a ſpecial care of our external Behaviour, coming under the view and obſervation of Men, that it be perfectly innocent and inculpable,) I did propoſe divers Motives inducing to the obſervance of it; but divers others of great importance the time would not allow me to urge; I ſhall therefore now proceed to offer them to your Conſideration.

I did then ſhew that a regard to the reaſon and nature of things, to the ſatisfaction of our Conſcience, to the honour of God, and to the credit of our Religion, did require from us a good Converſation before Men: I now farther add, that,

I. The real intereſt of Piety and Vertue do exact ſuch a Converſation as the moſt effectual way of upholding, advancing, and propagating them among Men.

Example is a very powerful thing either way; both for attraction to Good, and ſeduction to Evil; ſuch is the nature of Men, that they are more apt to be guided by the practice of others, than by their own Reaſon, and more eaſily can write after a Copy, than by a Rule; that they are prone to imitate whatever they ſee done, be it good or bad, convenient or inconvenient, profitable or hurtful, emulating the one, and aping the other; that they love to be in the faſhion, and will go any whither in Company, preſuming of ſupport, defence and comfort therein; that they will ſatisfie their Minds, and juſtifie their doings by any authority, deeming that laudable or allowable, or at leaſt tolerable and excuſable, for which they can alledge Precedents; judging that if they are not ſingular, they are innocent, or however not very culpable; that hardly they will undertake any thing without Countenance, whereby their Modeſty is in ſome meaſure ſecured, and Partners engaged to bear a ſhare with them in the Cenſure, to which their deportment is liable. Hence a viſible good Converſation will have a great efficacy toward the promotion and propagation of goodneſs; the authority of that being adjoined to the native worth and beauty, to the rational plauſibility, to the ſenſible benefit of Vertue, will cogently draw Men to it; it will be a clear Pattern, whereby they ſhall be informed what they are obliged, and what they are able to perform; it will be a notable Spur ſmartly exciting them to mind and purſue their Duty; it will be a vigorous Incentive, inflaming their Courage, and provoking an emulation to do well.

The viſible ſuccour and countenance of many, eſpouſing the Cauſe of Goodneſs by their Practice, will aſſuredly bring it into requeſt and vogue, and thence into current uſe and faſhion; ſo juſt a Cauſe cannot fail to proſper, having any reaſonable Forces to maintain it; it will have great ſtrength, great boldneſs and aſſurance, when a conſiderable Party doth appear engaged on its ſide.

Yea ſometimes even the Example of a few will do it great ſervice; the rarity giving a ſpecial luſtre to their Vertue, and rendring it more notable; according to that intimation of the *Apoſtle*; when he thus doth exhort
Phil. 2. 14, 15. the *Philippians* to a chearful and forward practice of Goodneſs; *Do all things* (ſaith he) *without Murmurings and Diſputings; that ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Generation, among whom ye ſhine as Lights in the World.*

A good Converſation doth notifie good Men to one another, and draweth them together, and combineth them in a Party, for the protection of Goodneſs, heartning and aiding one another therein.

Such Advantages Goodneſs doth always need; for it ever hath in the World many Adverſaries, ſtriving by violent force to beat it down, or by treacherous Fraud to ſupplant it; who uſe their authority and intereſt to ſuppreſs it; who by their evil Example do ſeduce from it; who labour by detraction to blaſt it, by ſcorn and reproach to diſcourage it, by divers temptations and baits to entice from it; who combining their Forces with the wicked Spirits, and with the corrupt Inclinations of Men, do raiſe a mighty Party for Wickedneſs.

Wherefore to balance ſuch Oppoſitions, Goodneſs doth need Friends to maintain it; not only Friends in Heart, or ſecret Well-wiſhers; but open Friends, who frankly will avow it, and both in Word and Deed will ſtoutly abet it.

A demure, baſhful, timorous Friendſhip will rather prejudice, than help it; for nothing will more animate its Foes to aſſail and perſecute it, than obſerving its Friends to ſlink and ſneak; When good Men hide their Faces, as if they were aſham'd of their Goodneſs, then bad Men will grow more impudent, and inſolent in their outrages againſt it.

Wherefore, if we would have Goodneſs hold up its head, we muſt openly take its part; if we would not be guilty of its ruine, we muſt ſtand up to uphold it; for whoever openly complieth with Sin, or neglecteth his Duty, may well be charged with its ruine; ſince if thou ſo deſerteſt Goodneſs, another after thy Pattern may do the like, and a third may follow him; ſo the neglect of it may ſoon be propagated, until at length it may be quite abandoned, and left deſtitute of ſupport: If it doth not thus happen, it will as to thee be accidental, and no thanks to thee for its better Fortune.

The declenſion of Piety is not perhaps more to be aſcribed to any other Cauſe, than to this, than that Men who approve Goodneſs in their Hearts, are ſo backward to ſhew it in their Practice; that good Men do ſo affect Retirement, and wrapping up their Vertue in Obſcurity; that moſt Men think it enough if in the cauſe of Religion againſt Profaneneſs and Diſſoluteneſs they appear *Neuters*, and do not impugn it: For if in a time of Infection all ſound Men do ſhut up themſelves, and all ſick Men walk abroad, how neceſſarily muſt the Plague reign in the place?

II. Charity toward our Neighbour demandeth from us a great care of our Converſation before Men.

The

The law of Charity, which is the great law of Chriſtianity, doth oblige us earneſtly to further our Neighbour's Good of all kinds, eſpecially that, which is incomparably his beſt Good, the welfare of his Soul; which how can we better do, than by attracting him to the performance of his Duty to God, and by withdrawing him from the commiſſion of ſin? And how can we do that without an apparently good Converſation, or without plainly declaring, as occaſion ſheweth, for Vertue, both in Word and Deed? how can a ſhy reſervedneſs conduce to that end? What will inviſible Thoughts or Affections of Heart confer thereto?

'Tis a precept of Charity, that we ſhould *purſue things, wherewith one may edifie another*; and how can we perform that Duty, without imparting our Mind, and as it were transfuſing it into others; ſo as by converting them from Error and Sin, by inſtilling good Principles, by exciting good Reſolutions, to lay in them a foundation of Goodneſs, or by cheriſhing and improving the ſame to rear a ſtructure of Vertue in them? How can we mutually edifie, without mutually adviſing Vertue, exhorting to it, recommending and impreſſing it by our exemplary Behaviour? Rom. 14. 19. 1 Cor. 14. 26.

The *Apoſtles* do injoin, that we ſhould *exhort one another, and edifie one another*; that we ſhould *conſider one another, to provoke* (or to whet and inſtigate one another) *to love, and to good works*; the which can no wiſe be performed, without expreſly declaring for Goodneſs and remarkable acting in its behalf; To commend and preſs it by Word is a part of our Duty, but not all of it, nor ſufficient to this purpoſe; eſpecially ſeeing we cannot urge that with good confidence, nor ſhall be held ſerious in pleading for it, which we do not our ſelves embrace in practice; for how can we expect, that our Reaſon ſhould convince others, when it doth not appear really to have perſuaded our ſelves; when our doings evidently do argue the weakneſs of our Diſcourſe? Παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους. 1 Theſſ. 5. 11. Heb. 10. 24. Εἰς παροξυσμόν.

Words hardly will ever move without Practice, although Practice ſometimes will perſuade without Words; according to that of St. *Peter*; *Ye Wives be in ſubjection to your own Husbands, that if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won by the Converſation of the Wives, while they behold your chaſt Converſation coupled with fear* (or due reverence to them.) 1 Pet. 3. 1.

Again, We are frequently commanded to ſhun *the giving any Offence*; or *the putting a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall in the way of our Brother*; that is, to do any thing which any-wiſe may confer to his incurring any Sin; the which Precepts are violated not only by poſitive and active influence, by propoſing erroneous Doctrine, evil Advice, fraudulent enticements to Sin, or diſcouragements from Duty; but alſo by with-holding the Means, ſerving to prevent his Tranſgreſſion; ſuch as a tacit indulgence, or connivance, when good admonition may reclaim him; the omiſſion of good Example, when it is ſeaſonable, and probably may prove efficacious; for theſe Neglects have a moral cauſality, inducing or encouraging the commiſſion of Sin; our Silence, our forbearing to Act, our declining fair opportunities to guide him into the right way will be taken for ſigns of Approbation and Conſent; and conſequently as Arguments to juſtifie or excuſe bad Practice, in proportion to the Authority and Eſteem we have; which ever will be ſome in this caſe, when they favour the Infirmity of Men. 1 Cor. 10. 32. 8. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 3. Rom. 14. 13.

Charity doth farther oblige us, upon juſt Cauſe, and in due Seaſon, to check and reprove our Neighbour miſdemeaning himſelf; for, *Warn the diſorderly*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*; and, *Have no fellowſhip* (ſaith he) *with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*; and, *Thou ſhalt not* (ſaith 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Eph. 5. 11. Levit 19. 17.

(ſaith the *Law*) *hate thy Brother in thy Heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him*; where forbearance of Reproof is implied, to ſhew not only a defect of Charity, but hatred of our Brother; and a good reaſon is intimated for it, becauſe in ſo doing, we ſuffer Sin to lie upon him; not hindring his progreſs in it, not endeavouring his converſion from it; but Reproof is an overt Act, involving ſomewhat
Prov. 22. 5. of openneſs and plain freedom, ſuch as the *Wiſeman* doth prefer before cloſe good-will; for, *Open rebuke* (ſaith he) *is better than ſecret love.*

We are all thus far *the keepers of our Brethren*, and it is a charge incumbent on us, by all good means to preſerve them from the worſt of Miſchiefs.

In fine, there is plainly nothing more inconſiſtent with true Charity, than ſuch a compliance with Sin, or neglect of Duty in the ſight of our Neighbour, which is ſcandalous, or may prove contagious to him; for how can we love him, whoſe chief good, whoſe eternal welfare we do not tender? whom we do not fear to ſeduce into the way of extream Miſery, or do not at leaſt care to lead into the way of Happineſs; whom without any check we can ſuffer to forfeit the beſt Goods, and to incur the ſaddeſt Calamities?

Wherefore if the love of our ſelves, and a ſober regard to our own welfare be not ſufficient to induce us, yet a charitable diſpoſition, and a concernedneſs for our Neighbour (for our Brethren, our Relations, our Friends) ſhould move us to a good, innocent, vertuous, fruitful and exemplary Converſation; If we do not care to ſave our ſelves, yet let it pity
Rom. 14. 15. us to damn and deſtroy others by our negligence.

III. But if Charity will not move us, yet Juſtice, exacting from us a care of our good Converſation before Men, ſhould conſtrain us thereto.

Exemplary and edifying Converſation is a debt which we owe to the World; a good office impoſed on us by the Laws of common Humanity.

When without our own hurt or inconvenience we can do conſiderable good to our Neighbour, he hath a title thereto (granted by the common Author of our Nature, the abſolute Lord of all we are or have) and he may juſtly demand it from us; as we in like caſe might claim it from him, and certainly would in Matters agreeable to our Humour expect it; Wherefore ſeeing good Converſation not only doth not harm or incommode us, but is moſt beneficial to our ſelves, and it exceedingly may benefit our Neighbour, it is moſt juſt that we ſhould afford it to him; it is no more than fair dealing to do it, to neglect it is a real Injury to him.

To ſet ill example before our Neighbour, or (which is in part, and in effect the ſame) to with-hold good Example from him (for not to give a good Example is a bad thing, and ſo a bad Example; this) I ſay is plainly a great Iniquity, and a wrong to him. For,

Is it not an Injury to offer a Cup of Poyſon to any Man, to invite him to drink it, to be his taſter of it, ſo drawing him to take it off without ſuſpicion, or fear of deadly Miſchief? Is it not an Injury to forbear warning him thereof, or not to deter him from it, when it ſtandeth before him, and he is ready to put it to his Mouth? Would not ſuch a Man in all conſcionable eſteem paſs for a murtherer of his Neighbour?

Is it not a great Wrong to carry any Man out of his way (out of a right, eaſie, fair, and ſafe Road) into Mazes, Thickets, and Sloughs, or into intricate, foul, dangerous bye-ways? Is it not wrongful, when he doth wander or err, not to reduce him thence, not to ſet him in the right way?

Is

Is it not very foul dealing to bring a Man to a ſteep Precipice, and thence to leap down before him? Is it not ſo, not to ſtop him, when he is on the brink, and blindly moving forward to caſt himſelf down head-long?

If theſe be injurious dealings, then palpably it is far more ſuch to yield any Inticements or Encouragements, yea not to put Obſtructions, if we are able, to our Neighbour's incurring Sin, which to his Soul is all thoſe things; the moſt baneful Venom, the moſt woful Exorbitancy, the moſt pernicious Gulf that can be.

We *by ſinning* do not only (as the *Wiſeman* ſaith) *wrong our own Souls*, Prov. 8. 36. but we do alſo wrong the Souls of others; drawing them, or driving them by the efficacious impulſe of our Example into Miſchief and Miſery; for *When* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ye ſin ſo againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak* 1 Cor. 8. 12. *Conſcience, ye ſin againſt Chriſt*; he there ſpeaketh of bad Example; the which he not only affirmeth to be ſinful in regard of *Chriſt*, but calleth it ſinning againſt our Brethren; and ſuppoſeth that we thereby do wound, or *ſmite* their Conſcience; which to do is ſurely no leſs wrong to them, than if we ſhould aſſault, beat, and wound their Bodies; the wounds of Conſcience being of all moſt grievous, and producing moſt inſupportable Affliction; according to that of the *Wiſeman*, *The ſpirit of* Prov. 18. 14. *a Man will bear his Infirmities, but a wounded ſpirit who can bear?*

Ὁ γὰρ ἁμαρτάνων ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐν τινα τρόπον αὐτῶν δρῶντα οἰκοδομεῖσθαι εἰς τὸ τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖν. Const. Ap. 2. 17.

Τύπτοντες αὐτῶν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀσθενῆ —

Indeed by thus hurting our Neighbour, we do him a wrong, not only very great in it ſelf, but ſuch as may probably be irreparable, for which hardly we can ever be able to make him any reſtitution or compenſation; for a better Example ſcarce will reach all, whom a bad Example hath touched; the beſt Example hardly will avail to undo that, which a bad Example hath done; If thereby we have engaged our Neighbour in Sin, we by no means can reſtore his loſt Innocence; or prevent his ſaying, *Woe* Lam 5. 16. *be to me, for I have ſinned*; It will be very difficult to recover him into that ſtate (that ſound condition of Soul) from which we did move him; it will however coſt him, if not a final ruine, yet a ſore Repentance; the 1 Cor. 8. 11. pangs whereof no compenſation, which we can yield, will requite: The Wounds which we thereby do inflict may rankle, and prove incurable; they aſſuredly will find no eaſie Cure; they muſt however either in conſequence, or in the correction be very painful; and they will leave an ugly Scar behind them.

The injuſtice of this Practice may alſo farther appear, upon divers ſpecial Accounts.

All Men eſteem Pity a Debt, which one Man oweth to another, as liable to Grief and Miſery; (the obligation whereto is written in the Bowels of each Man) which Pity will incline to ſuccour the Object of it in danger or diſtreſs; wherefore every Man by the natural Law is bound to endeavour the prevention or the reſcue of another falling into Miſchief; according to that of St. *Jude*, *Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference*, Jude 22, 23. *and others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; whence to draw Men into Sin by ill Practice, or not to reſtrain them from it by good, is unjuſt, as a pitileſs hard-hearted, cruel thing.

1 Sam. 3. 13. (*His Sons made themſelves vile, and reſtrained them not.*)

Again, All Men hold Flattery to be a practice very abuſive, or more than ſimply wrongful: as with Injury joining Contempt and Cozenage: taking advantage of a Man's Infirmity to work Prejudice to him; it is indeed a miſchievous, a pernicious, and withal a perfidious, an inſidious, an enſnaring Practice; for, *A flattering Mouth* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) Prov. 31. 30. *worketh* *Favour is deceitful.*

Prov. 26. 28. 29. 5. *worketh ruine*, and *A Man that flattereth his Neighbour, ſpreadeth a Net for his feet?* But Flattery is not only verbal; the worſt Flattery is not that whereby Men ſooth and gloze with their Lips, encouraging others by fictitious Commendations to perſiſt in bad Courſes; there is a tacit Flattery, when by our connivance at Sin we ſeem to approve it; there is a real Flattery when by our compliance with Sin, we recommend it to our *Comrades*; Theſe do not look ſo groſly, yet do inſinuate our Mind, and commonly do inveagle to Sin more effectually; Men being more apt to truſt our Deeds than our Words, being more pleaſed in our vouching their Actions by a participation in them, and running a common hazard with them, than in our ſtraining to commend, or to excuſe them: whence it is, that groſs Flattery hath its effect chiefly upon ſimpler Folks, but this ſubtile Flattery doth often gull and abuſe Perſons of greateſt Capacity.

Again, A good Converſation before Men is a part of that due reſpect, which we owe to them; There is a regard, and a kind of reverence to be had toward every Man; which ſhould engage us to behave our ſelves decently in his Preſence, ſignifying a Conſideration and eſteem of his Perſon, of his Opinion, of his Reſentment, of his Affection toward us: To do any foul or unhandſome thing is a contempt of him, a rudeneſs toward him, an affront put on him; whereby in effect we do ſlight, diſparage, and reproach him; implying, that we do little value his Judgment, that we care not for his Good-will; that we preſume he hath not the ſenſe to diſcern, or hath not the Spirit to diſlike, or muſt have the Patience to comport with our unſeemly and unſavoury Carriage; And if to do other unhandſome things before Men is ſuch an Indignity offered to them, then it is eſpecially ſuch to commit Sin before them, which is the moſt ugly, the moſt ſordid, the moſt loathſome behaviour that can be; there is no deformity, no turpitude in Nature comparable to Sin; nothing ſo offenſive, ſo diſtaſtful, ſo abominable to a rational ſenſe; ſo that the Prov. 14. 21. 11. 12. *Wiſe-man*'s Saying is very true, taken any-way, *He that deſpiſeth his Neighbour, ſinneth*; 'tis both a Sin to contemn him; and ſinning is an argument of contempt toward him; Nor can we better obſerve St. *Peter*'s Injunc- 1 Pet. 2. 17. tion, that we *Honour all Men*, than by forbearing to ſin in their Preſence, out of reſpect to them. But farther,

IV. Let us conſider, that a good Converſation before Men is a publick Benefit, a great advantage to the World, and common ſtate of Men.

It is not only a good office of Charity to this or that Man; but it layeth a general Obligation on our Country, on our Age, on Poſterity it ſelf; upon which a fruitful Life, an exemplary Vertue may have notable influence.

As notorious Sin is a plague to the World, throwing Infection and Death about it; provoking the Wrath of Heaven, and thence deriving Vengeance on it; So notable Vertue is a general Bleſſing, producing moſt wholſome and comfortable Effects to Mankind.

For how can one more oblige the Publick, than by conferring help to uphold the Reputation, and to propagate the entertainment of thoſe things which are the main props of the World, for the ſake of which it ſtandeth, and by the means of which it is ſuſtained; than by preſerving the vertue and power of Conſcience, which is the band of all Society, the guardian of Faith and Honeſty, the beſt enſurer of Juſtice, Order, and Peace in the State; Prov. 14. 34. 20. 28. (that which *exalteth a Nation*, and *eſtabliſheth a Kingdom*) than by producing and promoting thoſe things, which certainly will procure the Favour and Bleſſing of God on any People?

How

How can a man better deſerve of the world, than by concurring to ſtop the contagion of ſin, and the overſpreading deluge of iniquity, together with all the lamentable miſchiefs conſequent on them; than by averting the fierce wrath, and ſevere judgments of God, which a general prevalence of wickedneſs neceſſarily will bring down?

Moſt men pretend to be concerned even for the honour of their Country; and how can we better promote that, than by checking the progreſs of *ſin*, which will not only be the bane, but *is* (as *Solomon* telleth us) *the reproach of any people*? Prov. 14. 34.

It may poſſibly be, it hath really been, that the conſpicuous vertue of a few men (yea ſometimes of one ſingle perſon) hath leavened a Country, hath ſeaſoned an age, hath imbued poſterity with an admiration of goodneſs, and with an affection to it. (*One man*, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*, *enflamed with zeal, may ſuffice to reform an entire people.*) So among the *Pagans*, one Perſon did ſet up the Study of Morality, and worthily was ſtyled *the parent of* (that moſt uſeful) *Philoſophy*, whereby he did exceedingly benefit mankind, and did confer much toward preparing men for the reception of our heavenly Philoſophy.

Ἀρχεῖ εἷς ἄνθρωπος ζήλῳ πεπυρωμένος καὶ ὁλόκληρον διορθώσασθαι δῆμον. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. α.

Socrates *philoſophiæ parens*. Cic.

Such our *Lord* deſigned his *Apoſtles* to be; for, *Ye* (ſaith he) *are the lights of the world, ye are the ſalt of the earth*; and ſuch in effect they did prove, *God by them* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *manifeſting the favour of his knowledge in every place*; they not onely by their heavenly doctrine, but chiefly by the luſtre and influence of their holy example, converting the world from impious errours and naughty practices, unto true religion, and vertuous converſation: They did lead men to goodneſs not only by the ears, but by the eyes, ſeeing their excellent life, and *walking as they had them for enſample*. Matt 5. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Phil. 3 17. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 16.

It conſequently may be, yea hath been, that the ſingular integrity of one, or of a few perſons, diſplaying it ſelf, hath appeaſed divine wrath, and hath ſtaved off imminent ruine from a people. So one *Noah* publickly maintaining, and *preaching righteouſneſs*, did preſerve the whole race of men from extirpation: So ten perſons avowing righteouſneſs would have kept *Sodom* from that ruful deſtruction: So one good man (notably owning God, and interpoſing for the concerns of piety) might have prevented that calamitous vengeance, which fell upon *Iſrael*; as *Jeremy* told before, and *Ezekiel* affirmed after it; *Run ye to and fro* (ſaith God in *Jeremy*) *through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh truth, and I will pardon it*; and, *I ſought for a man* (ſaith God in *Ezekiel*) *among them, that ſhould make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none: therefore have I poured mine indignation upon them.* There was then a *remnant* of thoſe, who cloſely did ſerve God; and perhaps *ſeven thouſand* unknown perſons, who had not in their hearts deſerted religion; but this did not avert God's wrath, or preſerve the Nation from captivity; as a few openly profeſſing, and reſolutely practiſing goodneſs, might have done. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Gen. 18. 32. Jer. 5. 1. Ezek. 22. 30. Iſa. 1. 9. 1 Kings 19. 14, 18.

Now who would not be glad of being ſo publick a friend, ſo general a benefactour, in performing that, which doth otherwiſe ſo much become him, and ſo greatly behove him; yielding him the beſt ornaments, and higheſt advantages even upon his private accompt? Who would not be ambitious both to oblige his Country, and to ſave his own ſoul together, by a worthy converſation?

Aſſuredly nothing can be deviſed more conducible to the effecting a reformation and amendment of the world, (and conſequently to the proſperity and felicity of mankind here) than a conſpiracy of good men in a frank and brisk avowing of goodneſs in the face of the world.

V. A care of our converſation in the ſight of men, is needful for the preſervation of our good name, and fair repute among them.

1 Chr. 29. 12. Eccl 6. 2. (Eccl. 7. 1.) A good name in holy Scripture is repreſented as a ſpecial gift, and bleſſing of God; beſtowed in recompence of piety and vertue; and preferred before other moſt conſiderable gifts and bleſſings, concerning our external ſtate; for, *By humility* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *and the fear of the Lord, are riches and honour*; both are the rewards of piety; but comparing them, *A good name* (ſaith he) *is rather to be choſen than great riches*; It cannot therefore be a contemptible thing, nor ought it to be neglected by us; for none of God's gifts, no reward which he propoſeth, ought to be ſlighted.

Prov. 22. 4. (Pſ. 112. 9.)

Prov. 22. 1.

Reaſon and experience alſo do concur in ſhewing that a good repute is a valuable thing, not only as a fair ornament of our perſons, and a commodious inſtrument of action toward our private welfare; as a guard of our ſafety and quiet, as ſerving to procure divers conveniences of life; but as very advantageous, very uſeful upon moral and ſpiritual accompts; qualifying us with greater eaſe and efficacy to ſerve God, and to do good; for indeed 'tis manifeſt, that without it we ſhall be uncapable of doing God or man any conſiderable ſervice.

Δι' οἰκονομίαν τινα. Anton. 4. §. 19.

Wherefore in duty and wiſdom we ſhould be careful of preſerving this jewel; the which we cannot otherwiſe do, than by obſerving this *Apoſtolical* rule, of *providing things honeſt in the ſight of all men*; for a good converſation is the only guard and convoy of a good name: How can men conceive good opinion of us, otherwiſe than from a view of worthy qualities and good deeds? They may charitably hope, but they cannot confidently judge well of us otherwiſe than upon good evidence: *Ye ſhall know them by their fruits*, (that is, by apparent works, falling under humane cogniſance) is the rule, whereby our Saviour teacheth us to diſtinguiſh of men, and to build a right opinion concerning them: Honour is the ſhadow, the inſeparable attendant of conſpicuous vertue.

Matt. 7. 16. 12. 33.

A good converſation will indeed command eſteem, and irreſiſtibly extort reſpect from all men.

Wiſe and good men heartily will approve it, and gladly will yield it due commendation; they cannot but honour it whenever they ſee it, as beſt ſuiting with their own judgment, and with their affection.

Rom. 14. 18.

Yea, it will procure reſpect even from the worſt men; for it is a miſtake to think, that bad men really do or can deſpiſe true goodneſs; in truth, however they may pretend or make a ſhew to ſlight and ſcorn it, however in words they may flout and revile it, yet in their hearts they cannot but admire and reverence it; although their will may be ſo perverted as to ſet them againſt it, yet their reaſon cannot be ſo deſtroyed (or natural light ſo quenched in them) as to diſapprove it; they do but vilely diſſemble, and belye their conſcience, when they make as if they did condemn, or contemn it: *As* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*) *they who openly do flatter ill livers, do in their mind reprove them; ſo they who envy the workers of good, in their conſcience will admire and approve them:* At leaſt they will do thus in their ſober mind; when with any ſerious application they do reflect on things; when

Οἱ ἐν Σασηνίᾳ τῦτο πεῖνῦντες, κ) τὸ συνειδὸς ὑμᾶς θαυμάσον), κ) ἀποδέξον)· ὥσπερ ἂν εἰ φανερῶς κολακένοιτες τὸν ἐν πονηρίᾳ ζῶντας, κ) νῦν διαβάλλεσι. Chryſ. in Matt. 5. 16.

when the eye of their ſoul is any-wiſe cleared from the miſts of luſt and paſſion: It is not to be heeded what they ſay in a fluſter or ranting mood; when they are near out of their wits, and have their judgment ſtifled by ſenſual imaginations; but what they think, when their mind is ſomewhat compoſed, and natural light doth ſhine freely in it.

Indeed ſuch wretches really do moſt deſpiſe thoſe, who conſort and comply with them in ſinful follies: As they cannot in their hearts honour themſelves, ſo they cannot eſteem thoſe whom they find like unto them; eſpecially they deſpiſe thoſe whom they obſerve to be ſo baſe and ſilly, as againſt their own judgment and conſcience, to fear their diſpleaſure, or to regard their cenſure; looking upon them as vaſſals to their humour, and renegadoes from their own conſcience.

Moreover, a good converſation certainly will engage Almighty God to protect our reputation, and to confer honour upon us. For he as Governour of the World, the Patron of goodneſs, the Diſpenſer of proper rewards to all, is in a manner bound to encourage thoſe openly, who viſibly do own him and take his part, who promote his glory and intereſt, who pay him due ſervice and obedience; who in regard to his authority, do faithfully purſue that which is right and good; He ſurely will ſee fit to repay ſuch in the ſame kind, by openly acknowledging, countenancing, and honouring them; Accordingly he hath tied himſelf to do ſo by his expreſs word and promiſe; for, *Them*, ſaith he, *that honour me, I will honour*; *and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; he ſaid it in reference to old *Eli*, who had neglected the duty of *reſtraining his ſons* from ſin; which is a caſe very much of kin to all neglect of exemplary piety. And, *Whoſoever*, ſaith our Lord, *ſhall confeſs me before men, him ſhall the Son of man alſo confeſs before the Angels of God*; *but he that denieth me before men, ſhall be denied before the Angels of God*; the which (one moſt comfortable, the other moſt terrible) ſentences are to be underſtood, He that confeſſeth our Lord not meerly by verbal profeſſion, (for divers ſuch who *ſay*, *Lord*, *Lord*, he will not ſo much as *know* at the final judgment) but in real practice; He that denieth him, not only by renouncing him with the tongue, but by diſobeying him in ſcandalous converſation, by working iniquity, by the Apoſtaſie of bad manners.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

Luke 12. 8.

Matt. 7. 22, 23.

VI. Laſtly, The publick diſcharge of a good conſcience will yield manifold advantages, and great benefits to our ſelves; not only as good (and thence needful to our ſalvation, and our comfort) but as publick; ſome of which I ſhall touch.

Such a practice will much ſecure and ſtrengthen us in goodneſs; for he that hath the heart, with reſolution and conſtancy, to doe well, notwithſtanding any worldly diſcouragement, although he thereby doth croſs the humour of the world, and incurreth the diſpleaſure, envy, hatred, cenſure, and obloquy of men, he thus having exalted his vertue above the favour and fear of the world, hath ſet it in a ſafe place, hath rendred it impregnable.

The conſideration of having obtained ſo happy, and ſo worthy a victory over the moſt dangerous temptations, (the victory of faith over the world) will be very comfortable; And the ſufferings which (from the diſfavour, enmity, and oppoſition of men) do attend ſuch a practice, being a kind of martyrdom, will yield all the joys and comforts (together with the hopes and rewards) of an heroical patience.

1 John

It will afford great ſatisfaction of mind, to reflect on the conſequences of ſuch a practice; and to conſider, that our reſolution hath engaged or confirmed others in goodneſs, hath preſerved them from ſin, hath withdrawn them from bad courſes, and ſaved them from perdition; that we have been inſtrumental to the ſalvation and happineſs of any ſoul; that beſide our own ſins (which are a burthen too heavy for any man well to bear) we have not the ſins of others to accompt for, and ſhall not be loaded with the guilt of thoſe, whom our neglect of duty, our compliance with ſin, our ſtupid coldneſs and indifference in regard to ſpiritual affairs, our diſſimulation or connivence at the ſcandalous violation of God's honour, and tranſgreſſion of his laws, might have encouraged in ſin; that we are not liable to that reproof in the Prophet, *Ye have ſtrengthned the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way.*

Ezek. 13. 22.

We ſhall highly oblige thoſe, whom by our good endeavour or example we ſhall convert to righteouſneſs, or reclaim from iniquity, or ſhall anywiſe ſtop in their carriere to ruine; who when they ſhall recover from their errour, and ſoberly reflect on their caſe, (when they ſhall ἀνανήψαν, become again ſober, getting out as it were of their drunken fit) will heartily thank us, will bleſs us, will pray for us, as having laid on them a very great obligation, and done them the greateſt kindneſs that could be; ſo that they will be ready to ſay to us, as *David* did to *Abigail*, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who ſent thee this day to meet me; and bleſſed be thy advice; and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from ſhedding of blood:* This will be the conſequence of plain dealing in ſuch caſes, and that will be fulfilled, which the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour, than he that flattereth with the tongue.*

2 Tim. 2. 26.

1 Sam. 25. 32.

Prov. 28. 23. 27. 6. 19. 25.

We thereby ſhall eſcape the ſore complaints, and fell curſes of thoſe, whom our naughty or careleſs demeanour hath involved in ſinful practice; for when their conſcience is awakened into a ſenſe of their guilt, when they feel the ſtings of remorſe, when they perceive the extreme damage and woe which they have incurred, then will they diſcharge their reſentments of heart againſt thoſe, who have any-wiſe been acceſſory to their fall into ſuch a condition; then in their bitterneſs of ſoul, in the agony of their ſorrow and perplexity, they will be apt to exclaim, Curſed be the day that I knew ſuch an one, or that I did converſe with him, who did betray me into this plight, who did inveagle me into temptation, who did not pluck me back from that ſinful practice, by which I now ſo deeply ſuffer; Curſed be his baſe cowardice, his fond modeſty, his affected wiſdom, his treacherous negligence, his unconſcionable indifference, his impious want of zeal for God's honour, and charity for my ſoul, which did keep him from checking me in my bad courſes, and reclaiming me to my duty by wholeſom reproof, by ſeaſonable advice, by exemplary practice before me: It will ſurely be a great comfort to us, that we have not given occaſion for ſuch complaints; but in proportion may ſay with St. *Paul, I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.*

Acts 20. 26. Ezek. 7. 17. 33. 7.

It is alſo no ſmall advantage to us, that by a good converſation we ſhall procure the particular friendſhip and affection of good men; for it is that, which diſcovereth good men to one another, which kindleth their affection toward each other, which draweth them together, and breedeth a familiarity between them, and knitteth their hearts together in a holy love; from whence they come to enjoy the faithful advice, the kind aſſiſtance, the ſeaſonable conſolations, and the hearty prayers each of other; the which

which great benefits are loſt by concealment of our ſelves, and reſervedneſs in doing good; for how can any man know him to deſerve love, whoſe goodneſs is not diſcernible?

Such conſiderations may induce all perſons, of every rank and condition, to obſerve this Apoſtolical Precept, ſo far as their capacities do reach. I ſhall only adjoin, that it eſpecially doth concern perſons of quality, in proportion to their eminency in dignity, power, authority, reputation, or any peculiar advantage, whereby the beneficial efficacy of good converſation is encreaſed.

Such perſons are like *a city ſeated on a mountain, which cannot be hid*; the height of their ſtation, and luſtre of their quality, do expoſe them to the obſervation of all; and their authority doth recommend their practice to the imitation of obſervers. Mat. 5. 15.

Their example cannot fail of having a mighty influence; its light doth guide men, its weight doth ſway them; it doth ſeem to warrant and authorize practice; inferiours would be afraid or aſhamed to diſcoſt from it.

They have not the temptations, which other men have, to comply with ſin out of fear, out of complaiſance, out of deſign; they being to lead and give law, not to follow or receive it; they being the firſt movers in converſation; the faſhion being regulated by them, or indeed being meerly a conformity to their deportment.

They ſhould by their innocence qualifie themſelves to reprove others with authority and courage. *Conſt. Apoſt.* 2. 17.

They in gratitude to God, who hath beſtowed on them ſuch advantages, are obliged to employ them for his ſervice.

They particularly were deſigned and endowed with thoſe advantages, that by them they might countenance, might encourage, might reward, might by all means promote goodneſs in the world. Rom. 13. 3---6. 1 Pet. 2. 14.

They accordingly are reſponſible for the influence their converſation hath; ſo that in the final accompt moſt actions of men will lie at their door, ſo that they ſhall reſpectively be either highly rewarded for the vertues and good works, or ſeverely puniſhed for the vices and ſins of mankind: The which moſt weighty conſideration I leave by God's grace to be ſeriouſly applied by them, who are concerned therein.

SER-

SERMON XXXIV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not only in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.

IF we obſerve the world, we may eaſily therein diſcern many perſons, who being inwardly well diſpoſed, (ſtanding right both in judgment and affection to goodneſs) are yet loth to appear very good, and hardly will own Chriſtian vertue, in the conſtant diſcharge of publick duties, or in ſtrict abſtinence from ſinful practices; but commonly (againſt the dictate of their reaſon, and ſenſe of their heart) neglect the one, and comply with the other: An odd ſort of hypocrites, or diſſemblers; who ſtudiouſly conceal their better part, and counterfeit themſelves worſe than they are; who adore God in their hearts, and addreſs devotions to him in their cloſets; but ſcarce will avow him in their viſible profeſſion and practice; who have a conſcience, but are ſhy of diſcloſing it, or letting it take air, and walk in open light; confining it as a criminal to cloſe reſtraint, or obſcure retirement; who gladly would be religious and ſtaunch, if there might be no notice taken of it, but take care of being remarkable (or as it were ſcandalous) for it; who think fit to compromiſe, and compound the buſineſs between God and the world, maintaining a neutrality, and correſpondence with both, ſo as privately to court the one, and publickly to cloſe with the other.

Such practice is flatly repugnant to that Rule, which otherwhere in precept, and here by his own example the holy *Apoſtle* doth recommend to us; directing us not only *before God* (that is, in our heart, and in our ſecret retirements, which God alone doth behold) but alſo *before men*, that is, in our external and viſible converſation carefully to perform things good and laudable, eſchewing whatever is bad or culpable.

Rom. 12. 17. Ἐναντιον Κυρίου.

Our obligation to which Rule hath already been confirmed by divers other Precepts in *holy Scripture*, concurring in the injunction of it; and its obſervance urged by various poſitive conſiderations of great weight and force, (declaring how neceſſary it is for promoting God's honour and glory, how requiſite it is for maintaining the dignity of our profeſſion, and advancing the intereſts of goodneſs, how charity and juſtice toward our neighbour do exact it from us, how conducible it is to the publick benefit of mankind, and how advantageous in many reſpects to our own particular welfare) and not inſiſting farther upon thoſe conſiderations, I ſhall now only inforce it, by ſcanning the common principles, grounds, motives, pretences, or excuſes of the contrary practice, which I before touched, of openly

openly deſerting vertue, or declining the performance of duty before men; and by ſhewing how very fooliſh and vain, how very naughty and baſe, how very miſchievous, dangerous, and pernicious they are.

They chiefly are thoſe, which I ſhall immediately touch and reflect upon.

1. Men commonly in their viſible converſation do neglect their duty, or comply with ſin out of modeſty; becauſe they are aſhamed of doing that, which may expoſe them to ſome diſgrace or cenſure; becauſe vertuous practice may raiſe diſtaſte in the company, and provoke the ſcorn of thoſe with whom they converſe; becauſe ſuch a point of duty is out of requeſt, and ſlighted in the world; they are *afraid of mens faces*; their tender forehead cannot ſuſtain deriſion, or endure to be flouted for being out of the mode, and wearing an uncouth garb of conſcience. Jer. 1. 8.

But this plainly is a perverſe, and unmanly modeſty; a fond, a vile, a ſhameful ſhame: Fie on it; ſhould any man be aſhamed of that, which is his chief beauty, his beſt ornament, his ſole dignity and glory? Should a man be aſhamed of being evidently wiſe in his conduct, of following his reaſon, of conſulting his true intereſt, of purſuing his own certain welfare and felicity? Is it fit that any man ſhould be aſhamed of paying due acknowledgment, of yielding due reverence, of rendring due gratitude, of performing due ſervice to his Creatour, Sovereign Lord, and great Benefactor; to whom he oweth all, upon whoſe will he entirely dependeth, at whoſe abſolute diſpoſal he is? Surely theſe are no ſhameful things, but ſuch rather, wherein we ought to have the greateſt confidence, which we ought to perform with the greateſt aſſurance.

If we are baſhful, let us be ſo in regard to things which are truly ſhameful; let us be aſhamed of ſin, that is, of our moſt real deformity, our turpitude, our diſgrace, our wretchedneſs; the which indeed is the onely diſhonourable and deſpicable thing; the which did firſt produce ſhame, and did introduce it into the world, (for while innocence did abide, there was no ſhame) and the which will ever carry ſhame along as its inſeparable adherent: It would indeed become us to bluſh at our horrible unworthineſs, and deteſtable ingratitude toward our bountiful Lord, and moſt gracious Redeemer; it were proper for us to be confounded at our extreme folly, and foul treachery toward our ſelves, in betraying our ſouls to guilt, to regret, to wrath and puniſhment: Who ſhould be aſhamed, who not, the holy *Pſalmiſt* hath well taught us, *Let none that wait on thee be aſhamed; let them be aſhamed which tranſgreſs without cauſe*; and, *Let the proud be aſhamed* —— but, *Let my heart be ſound in thy ſtatutes, that I be not aſhamed.* Gen. 3. 2. 2. 25. Pſal. 25. 3. Pſal. 119. 78-80.

It is true modeſty to be aſhamed of doing unworthy and unhandſom things; but to be aſhamed of doing what reaſon and duty require, is pitiful weakneſs of mind.

We do not owe ſo much regard to vicious and vain perſons, as to be daſhed out of countenance by them; we ſhould rather by our maſculine reſolution and upright confidence put them to confuſion. Tit. 2. 8.

If ſhame be an evil which we would avoid, the onely remedy thereof we may learn from thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect to thy teſtimonies*: But it is a fond courſe to ſhun diſgrace by doing that which alone deſerveth it. Pſal. 119. 6.

Is it not alſo a wild thing, to ſeem modeſt toward men, while we are really ſo bold with God, as preſumptuouſly to offend him, to affront him, *Quid quæſo rationis habet verecundari ad diem hominis, & vultum Dei non vereri?* Bern. *Ep.* 108.

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Iſa. 65. 3. Jer. 6. 17. 8. 12. *to provoke him* (as thoſe in the Prophet did) *to his face?* For ſo indeed every ſinner doth; and as it is the greateſt inadvertency not to conſider God always preſent with us, ſo it is the height of impudence to ſin in his preſence, or to prefer a regard to men before the reverence due to his eye.

Is it not alſo great folly, for declining a little preſent tranſient diſgrace, to do that, whereof afterward we ſhall be grievouſly and perpetually Sap. 4. 20. aſhamed; which we ſhall never remember or reflect upon without con- (Jer. 22. 22.) fuſion, (according to that of the *Apoſtle*, *What fruit had ye of thoſe* Rom. 6. 21. *things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?*) the conſequence whereof is our Dan. 12. 2. ſtanding obnoxious to *ſhame and everlaſting contempt.*

If we be thus aſhamed of God, and of our duty to him, may he not juſtly in recompence be aſhamed of us, and diſdain to own us in favour and mercy? He will ſurely, he hath often declared ſo; *Whoſoever*, ſaith Luke 9. 26. 12. 9. our *Lord*, *ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words, of him ſhall the Son of* 2 Tim. 2. 12. *man be aſhamed, when he ſhall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels.*

2. Another principle, near of kin to the former, diſpoſing men to commit ſin, or wave duty in their open converſation, is, fear of loſing the good-will, or getting the ill-will of men.

It muſt often happen, that whoever will be vertuous, and ſtick to his duty, will forfeit the favour of men, will incur their diſpleaſure, will provoke their indignation; by croſſing their humour and conceit, by implicitly ſlighting their opinion, and condemning their practice; this is the portion and fate of ſtrict and ſtiff piety; the friendſhip of God and the James 4. 4. world are not well conſiſtent; and St. *Paul's* rule may be converted, *If I* 1 John 2. 15. *ſhould pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt:* Hence men pri- Gal. 1. 10. zing the favour of men, with the advantages of it, and dreading their anger, hatred, diſdain, with the miſchiefs conſequent on them, are ſcared from their duty.

But in truth this is a ſilly, a baſe, a ſorry fear, arguing wretched meanneſs of ſpirit, and pitiful cowardice. For,

Doſt thou, fond wretch, fear to loſe the favour of man, whoſe favour doth avail nothing to thy main intereſts, and cannot any-wiſe conſiderably benefit thee, (for in no reſpect doſt thou depend on his will and providence) but doſt not fear being deprived of God's favour, upon which all thy good hangeth, wherein thy felicity conſiſteth, without which thou art uncapable of any proſperity, of any ſecurity, of any joy or comfort?

Doſt thou fear the diſpleaſure of man, of poor impotent man, a ſorry Job 25. 6. frail *worm*, whoſe *breath is in his noſtrils*, (ready to fly away in every Iſa. 2. 22. moment) whoſe anger can do thee no real harm, whoſe power can hard- Matt. 10. 28. ly touch thee, can no-wiſe reach thy ſoul, or its concerns; whilſt thou dreadeſt not to offend the Eternal Almighty God, under whoſe feet thou lieſt, ready to be cruſhed into nothing, or ſtampt down into hell at his pleaſure?

Dareſt thou not, O heartleſs daſtard, to do that, which is in thy power eaſily to do, which thou art infinitely concerned to do, which upon ſo many accompts thou art obliged to do, out of fear to croſs thine equal, yea far thine inferiour in this caſe; for he that ſtandeth to his duty, as he hath the better cauſe, ſo he hath the greater force, and aſſuredly will defeat all his oppoſers?

Art thou, O puſillanimous ſlave, in regard to any Creature, thy fellow-ſubject, and ſervant, afraid of expreſſing thy loyalty to thy Sovereign Lord, thy

thy love to infinite Goodneſs, thy Gratitude to thy beſt Friend and kindeſt Benefactor, thy Reverence toward the Divine Majeſty, thine awe of uncontrollable Power; Is this a reaſonable, an excuſable, a tolerable fear?

Surely, if ever to be driven out of Heart is reproachful, if ever to be cowed doth argue Infirmity and Abjectneſs of Spirit, it is in this Caſe; when we have all the Reaſon and Obligation in the World to be moſt courageous and reſolute, to fear no Colours, to make our Party good againſt all oppoſition; when we have the greateſt neceſſity to engage us, and the greateſt advantage to encourage us to hold out ſtoutly; the greateſt neceſſity, ſeeing all that we have, our Life, our Salvation, our eternal Weal doth lie at ſtake; *For it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your Life:* The greateſt advantage, for that if we will, we are invincible, and aſſured of an eaſie Victory, ſeeing we take part with God, and have Omnipotency on our ſide; ſo that we can ſay with *David, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me? The Lord is my light, and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?*

Deut. 32. 47.

Pſal. 118. 6. Heb. 13. 6. Pſal. 56. 11. 11. 4. 27. 1, 3. 46. 2. Jer. 1. 8. 20. 11. Iſa. 41. 10. Gen. 26. 24. 15. 1. Numb. 14. 9. Deut. 31. 8. 2 Chron. 20. 17.

There is not indeed to thoſe who are under God's ſpecial Protection, and confide in him, any thing in nature, really formidable or terrible; it is his peculiar Attribute to be the Mighty and Terrible One: He recommendeth himſelf to us as *our fear*, that is, the ſpecial Object of it; we therefore do ſacrilegiouſly wrong him, by fearing any other thing in ſuch Caſes of Competition, and when we are concerned to fear him; whence then we are prohibited to fear the greateſt Powers in the World; *Fear not them which kill the Body* (if God permit them) *but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him who is able to deſtroy both Body and Soul in Hell.*

Jer. 5. 22. 10. 7 Rev. 15. 4. Deut. 7. 21. 10. 17. 28. 58. Pſ. 76. 7, 11. 99. 3. Iſa. 8. 12. 41. 10. Matt. 10. 26, 28.

Who (ſaith St. *Peter*) *is he that will* (or that can) *harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* ——wherefore *be not afraid of their Terror, neither be troubled; but ſanctifie the Lord God in your Hearts* (by a pure Confidence in him.)

Τίς ὁ κακώσων; 1 Pet. 3. 13, 14.

In ſuch caſes, we ſhould be ready to accoſt the greateſt Potentates, in Terms like thoſe of the three brave Youths in *Daniel*: *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to anſwer thee in this matter: If it be ſo, our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery Furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine Hand, O King; But* (however) *if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not ſerve thy Gods, nor worſhip thy golden Image which thou haſt ſet up:* And if in imitation of ſo worthy an Example, we ſhould defie the Wrath of the greateſt Kings, demanding any ſinful Compliance from us, how poor a thing is it to fear the Diſpleaſure of ſorry Companions enticing us to the like? how much more ſhould we defie all the crew of hectorly Ruffians, and huffing Bragadochios?

Dan. 3. 16.

While wicked profane Men are ſo bold and ſtout in impugning Goodneſs; we ſhould be couragious in defence of it. *The Righteous is as bold as a Lion.*

Prov. 28. 1.

The Fear of God (the which is moſt reaſonable and prudent, and conſiſtent with the braveſt Courage) ſhould exclude the Fear of Men; the which is no leſs vain than baſe; the which indeed doth involve the wildeſt Boldneſs, and moſt raſh Fool-hardineſs in the World, puſhing us into the moſt deſperate Adventures that can be; while by ſinning we incenſe the moſt dreadful Anger, we invade the moſt formidable Power, we incur the moſt horrible Dangers, we run headlong into the Jaws of Death and Hell: ſuch a mixture there is of baſe Cowardice, and mad audacity in Practices ſuing from that Principle.

3. Men commonly do neglect the open Practice of Vertue, out of care to decline Envy; for ill Men ſeeing others endowed with worthy Qualities, which they want; performing good Deeds, from which their Infirmity or Pravity doth hold them averſe; entitled to Commendations, Rewards and Advantages to which they cannot aſpire, and whereby they ſeem to eclipſe their Credit, or impair their Intereſt, or expoſe their Unworthineſs; cannot look on ſuch Perſons without an *evil Eye*, or without conceiving in their Heart malevolent Grudges at them, which they will be apt to vent in ſpiteful Practices, endeavouring to ſupplant or blaſt their Vertue; Men are apt to envy the Favourites of God, as they are of Princes. Nor indeed doth any thing more powerfully incite Men to hurt their Neighbour, than ſuch Malignity, being edged by that anguiſh, which their ſore Eye doth feel; to ſhun which Envy, and its miſchievous Effects Men commonly are tempted to withdraw its Cauſe, their own Vertue, that its bright Luſtre may not wound the Sight of ſuch Neighbours.

Invidiam placare paras virtute relictâ? Contemnere miſer. Hor. *Serm.* 2. 3.

But thus *to appeaſe Envy by deſerting Vertue* is very fond and abſurd. For,

Shall I caſt away my beſt Goods, becauſe another would not have me to enjoy them? ſhall I be terribly ſick, to cure another's diſtempered Fancy? ſhall I render my ſelf miſerable, becauſe another doth not like to ſee me happy? becauſe he doth want Charity, muſt I forego Innocence? becauſe he doth not love me, ſhall I hate my ſelf? to pleaſe him merely, without bettering him, to eaſe him of a wholſome Smart, ſhall I diſpleaſe God, and abuſe my ſelf?

Would he not be a ſilly Man, who being envied becauſe he ſeemeth a Favourite of his Prince, would to gratifie ſuch Enviers, offend his Prince? No ſurely, this is too fond a regard unto any Man's baſe Diſpoſition, this is too great a Gratification of an Enemy's Pleaſure, this is too ſlaviſh a Depreſſion of a Man's ſelf; rather let him fret, let him torment himſelf, let him inflict a juſt Puniſhment on his own uncharitable and unworthy Humour; whereby perhaps he may be reduced to diſcern his Folly, and correct his Fault.

Would any Man upon ſuch Terms part with his Eſtate, mar his Buſineſs, ſlur his Reputation, or purpoſely play the fool? would any Man become poor, infamous or contemptible, becauſe to be rich, to be proſperous, to be honourable, to be wiſe are invidious things? Much leſs ſhould a Man upon that account neglect his Duty, thereby betraying his Soul, diſcarding the Love and Favour of God, deſtroying the ſatisfaction of his Conſcience, and forfeiting his hopes of Felicity: Damages and Miſchiefs comparable to which all the Envy and ſpight in the World can no-wiſe bring upon him.

If we would avoid Envy, we ſhould not do it by incurring a worſe Evil, and rendring our ſelves contemptible for Unworthineſs; we ſhould rather damp it by Modeſty, Humility, an inoffenſive Tenour of Life.

We ſhould ſurmount it, and quaſh it by conſtant blameleſs Converſation. The which will kill the Envious, or the Envy.

An unqueſtionable Vertue will ſtop the Mouth of Detraction, and drive Envy into Corners, not daring to ſhew it ſelf againſt it.

4. A common Principle, from whence neglect of Duty, and commiſſion of Sin in viſible Converſation doth ſpring, is a fear of Infamy, and reproach, whereto the ſtrict practice of Vertue is liable: Men not enduring to bear the odious Cenſures, the foul Imputations, the ugly Characters, the ſcurvy Epithets, and opprobrious Names, wherewith the bold and ſpiteful Enemies of Goodneſs are wont to aſperſe and brand its faithful Adherents.

To

To be deemed weak, credulous, ſuperſtitious, formal, timorous, nice, ſqueamiſh, ſcrupulous, ſtraitlaced, conceited, affected, croſs, ſurly, moroſe, froward, ſtubborn, pertinacious, proud.

To be termed a ſoppiſh *Simpleton*, doting on Speculations, and enſlaved to Rules; a fantaſtical *Humoriſt*, a preciſe *Bigot*, a rigid *Stoick*, a demure *Sneakſby*, a clownish *Singulariſt*, a *Non-conformiſt* to ordinary uſage, a ſtiff *Opiniatre*; a Man of a pitiful narrow Spirit, pent up within a ſmall compaſs, confined by Principles, fettered by Laws, living in Bondage to his Conſcience.

Theſe and the like hard Cenſures, foul Reproaches, and abuſive Scoffs, even all which Invention quickned by Envy, Choler, rancorous Spite, and aided by the malicious Fiend, can ſuggeſt, wherewith the profane Crew of Men uſually do conſpire to daub and perſecute thoſe who refuſe to comply with their unconſcionable Extravagancies and Impieties, Men can hardly brook, and thence to ſhun them yield up all, croſs their Reaſon, proſtitute their Conſcience, violate all their Obligations; chuſing rather to be juſtly reproachable for bad Actions, than unjuſtly reproached for good. Pſal. 57. 3, 4.

But with ſuch a Perſon, who is thus diverted from his Duty, let me expoſtulate:

Doſt thou well to regard what unbribled Tongues out of a wanton Mind and corrupt Heart do ſputter and foam? Shall thy Practice depend on their looſe Wit or licentious Talk, ſo that thou muſt do nothing which they ſhall not be in humour to commend? *Nihil eſt turpius quàm ſapientis vitam ab inſipientium ſermone pendere.* Cic. *de Fin.* 2. (p. 147.)

Wilt thou renounce all Wiſdom, abandon thy beſt Intereſt, forfeit thy Happineſs to decline a Squib, or a Flurt? *Quid de te alii loquantur, ipſi videant.* Scipio *apud* Cic. *in Somn.*

Would not he be a ſtark Fool who would he railed or jeered out of his Way in Travel, out of his Buſineſs in Traffick, out of his Eſtate, or real Intereſt upon any occaſion; and is he not evidently far more ſuch, who will be flouted out of his Duty, out of his Salvation, out of any ſpiritual Advantage? was not the Practice of *David* more adviſeable, who ſaid, *The proud have had me in deriſion, yet have I not declined from thy Law?* Pſal. 119. 51.

David, a great King, a Man of ſingular Courage and Gallantry, a glorious Hero; yet even him did bold and baſe People deride. Whom will not profane Impudence aſſail? whom will not they attempt to deter from Goodneſs?

Art thou ſo blind, as not to diſcern whence it cometh, that they diſparage Vertue? that is, from their extreme Vanity and Raſhneſs, which move them to ſpeak any thing without conſideration or diſcretion; from their great naughtineſs and weakneſs, their being bewitched with Pleaſure, and beſotted with Vice, which engageth them to take part ſo furiouſly with them; from their malignity, and ſpite againſt that which croſſeth their fond Humours and exorbitant Luſts; from their Pride which ſwelleth againſt thoſe, who by contrary Practice diſſent from their Folly, and reprove their Wickedneſs, and eclipſe their Repute; from their Envy, which repineth at thy appearing better and happier than themſelves thy excelling them in true Worth, thy enjoying that ſatisfaction which they want, thy attaining that bleſſed Hope, to which they cannot aſpire; and ſeeing that their Reproaches do iſſue from ſuch Principles, wilt thou regard them?

Are their Words any Slander, who being profeſſed Enemies of Goodneſs, do naturally impugn it by the readieſt Arms they have, a virulent and petulent Tongue? Οὐδεὶς φαῦλος τὰς ὑπὸ δικαίων παιόντων ὑπομένει. Iſid. Peluſ. *Ep.* 2. 220.

(Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἀρίστους, ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλω. Τὸ δοκεῖν γὰρ ἐστὶν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὥσπερ τὸ δοκεῖν ἄνεμος ἀλλότριον. Greg. Naz. *Orat.*—*de ſede Conſt.*) Ant. 8. §. 1.——

Can their dirty Language, beſpattering good things, after their nature, or render that diſhonourable and odious, which in it ſelf is moſt excellent, moſt amiable, moſt venerable, moſt uſeful and profitable?

Malis diſplicere laudari eſt. Sen. *Excerpt.* (*p.* 690.)

Is it not indeed a commendation of Vertue, which ſhould encourage us the more to like it, to honour it, to embrace it, that vain, wild, diſſolute Perſons, diſtempered in their Minds, notoriouſly void of Diſcretion, of Integrity, of Sobriety, do pretend to vilifie and diſgrace it?

Non poteſt bonus non eſſe, qui bonis placet; nec minùs validum argumentum mihi videtur, quod bonus ſit ſi malis diſpliceat. Bern *Ep.* 248.

Ἀφρονες. 1 Pet. 2. 15.
Ἄτοποι. 2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

As their Commendation is of no worth, ſo their Reproach is leſs conſiderable.

Ant. 3. §. 4.

Quanta dementia eſt vereri nè infameris ab infamibus? Sen. *Ep.* 91.

Doſt thou not diſparage thine own Judgment by heeding theirs, or ſuffering it to be of any conſideration with thee in the conduct of thy Life?

Doſt thou take them to be ſerious in this, or to ſpeak in good earneſt, when they reproach Vertue, and ſlight the plain Dictates of Reaſon, the clear Light of natural Conſcience, the expreſs commands of God, the apparent Concerns of their own Soul? they who are ſober in nothing, how can they be ſerious in this? why ſhould they ſeem judicious in ſuch a caſe?

Moverer ſi judicio hoc facerunt, nunc morbo faciunt. Sen. *Exc.*

Ego cùm à noſtro Catone laudabar, vel reprehendi me à cæteris facilè patiebar. Cic. *de Orat.*

Is it not evidently better to be ſlandered by giddy, lewd, ungodly Wretches, who mind not what they ſay, nor care what they do, whoſe Judgment therefore can ſignifie nothing; than really to deſerve reproof; and thence certainly to incur blame from all ſtaid, ſober, conſiderate, wiſe and vertuous Perſons, who judge adviſedly and uprightly about things?

Is it not better to undergo their ſevereſt Cenſure, and moſt biting Scoffs, than to be condemned of Folly and Baſeneſs by thy own Mind, and reviled by thy own Conſcience?

Is it not infinitely better to be unjuſtly defamed by Men, than to be diſreputed by God, expoſed to moſt diſgraceful condemnation at his Bar, and thrown into that ſtate of everlaſting Ignominy?

Dan. 12. 2.

Tu ergò plus opprobria times quàm tormenta? &c. Bern. *Ep.* 108.
Matt. 25. 41.

Is it not more tolerable to hear ſuch Language, than having violated our Duty, and broken God's Commands one Day to hear that diſmal Sentence, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire?*

Æquiſſimo animo ad honeſtum conſilium per mediam infamiam tendam, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 81.

It is a glorious Infamy, which one ſuſtaineth for the ſake of Righteouſneſs.

Non vis eſſe juſtus ſine gloria? at mehercule ſæpe juſtus eſſe debebis cum infamia. Sen. *Ep.* 113.

Ant. 5. §. 3. 11. 16. 9. 18.

Even *Heathens*, with whom Glory was the *moſt ample Reward*, and ſweeteſt *fruit of Vertue*, yet do injoin that we ſhould preſer Conſcience before it; and that we ſhould rather gladly embrace Infamy, than forſake Vertue.

[illegible] is the Lot of all good Men (for probation, exerciſe and improvement of their Vertue to be perſecuted) at leaſt in ſome times, as when St. *Paul* ſaid, *All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer Perſecution*; And ſurely he that ſincerely loveth God, would even deſire occaſion of ſuffering ſomewhat for his ſake, in teſtimony of his faithful Affection: But what more tolerable Perſecution, what more eaſie Martyrdom could we wiſh, than to be laſhed by a ſcurrilous Tongue; or rather to obſerve the Ears of others to be infeſted with the Buzzes of Detraction? what is this but a little Air ſtirred in vain, but a mere ſound or blaſt of Wind, importing nought to him that doth not mind it, or will not be affected with it?

2 Tim. 3. 12.
Acts 14. 22.
Heb. 12. 6—

the

the which ſurely to a ſound Heart and pure Conſcience cannot be very ſenſible; a Man muſt have a froward Temper, or a tender Ear, whom a little ſuch creaking, or grating noiſe doth much vex; all its force is broken, all its miſchief is remedied eaſily, by neglect or contempt. *Quid ſtultius homine verba metuente?* Sen *Ep.* 91.

It is in a manner more commendable to ſuffer for being good, than for being a Chriſtian; a truer Martyrdom to ſuffer for the Temper than for the Name of *Chriſt*; for doing well, than for profeſſing Truth.

Who indeed had ever been good, in any notable degree, if ſome had minded the Opinion, or the Diſcourſe of ſuch Men, whom in all times the great Adverſary of Goodneſs and Maligner of our Welfare hath excited to deter Men from Vertue by thus abuſing it? hath it not ever been the Portion of good Men to ſuffer in this kind?

Jer. 20. 7———
Pſal. 44. 16, 17. 57. 3, 4. 119. 51. 69. 10.
Job 12. 4. Sap. 5. 3.

Was not * our *Lord* himſelf, were not his *Apoſtles*, were not all the *Prophets* of old, were not all the *Heroes* in Goodneſs of all times thus purſued with Obloquy? what vile Imputation, what Name of Reproach can be deviſed, wherewith the ſpiteful World did not beſmear them?

Ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πεῖραν ἔλαβον. Heb. 11. 36.
* Heb. 12. 3. Ἀναλογίσασθε——
2 Cor. 6. 8. Διὰ δόξης, καὶ ἀτιμίας.

Yet were they much diſturbed at it, were they any-wiſe diſcouraged or ſcared by it from their Duty? No; they rather did find Satisfaction and delight in it; it rather did heighten their mind and ſtrengthen their reſolution; it begat a gallant, and triumphant diſdain of ſuch Injuries, enlivening and animating them in their carier of Duty; they did embrace Reproach for Righteouſneſs not only with content, as their proper Lot and Portion from God's Providence, but with Joy, as their ſpecial Glory and Happineſs, from divine Goodneſs; feeling it moſt true, what our *Maſter* taught, *Bleſſed are ye, when Men ſhall revile you, and ſhall ſay all manner of Evil againſt you falſly for my ſake: Bleſſed are ye when Men—ſhall reproach you, and caſt out your name as evil for the Son of Man's ſake*; and according to St. *Peter*, ὀνειδίζεσθε, *if ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt* (that is, for conſcionably diſcharging any Chriſtian Duty) *happy are ye, for the Spirit of Glory and of God reſteth on you; on their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

Ὀνειδισμοῖς τε θλίψεσι θεατριζόμενοι—
Heb. 10. 33.
Acts 5. 41.
2 Cor. 12. 10.
Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ὕβρεσιν——
Matt. 5. 11.
Luke 6. 22.
1 Pet. 4. 14.

In fine, it is all Reaſon, and it is the expreſs Command of God, that in ſuch Caſes we ſhould not regard the Cenſures, or the Reproaches of any Mortal: It is a part of Duty to deſpiſe Obloquy, to expoſe and loſe Reputation for God's ſake. For *Hearken* (ſaith he) *unto me ye that know Righteouſneſs, the people in whoſe Heart is my Law; fear ye not the Reproach of Men, neither be ye afraid of their Revilings; for the Moth ſhall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worm ſhall eat them like Wooll: but my Righteouſneſs ſhall be for ever, and my Salvation from Generation to Generation.*

Iſa. 51. 7, 8.

5. Men commonly decline the publick practice of Duty out of Affectation thereby to be deemed more honeſt and ſincere, or to decline the Suſpicion of being hypocritical.

As this is the moſt obvious and uſual Calumny wherewith diſſolute People do charge good Men; ſo to Men of generous Diſpoſition it is of all Cenſures moſt poinant, as moſt croſſing their Temper according to which as they hate to be, ſo they can hardly endure to be counted or called Diſſemblers; whence often they chuſe rather to ſeem indifferent to Goodneſs, than zealouſly affected to it; they rather wave ſome Points of Duty, than for the performance of them expoſe themſelves to that Imputation.

But this proceeding is very unreaſonable. For,

What

What can be more abſurd, than to be really and notoriouſly bad (as whoever omitteth his Duty is) to prevent a ſurmiſe of being ſuch? or to be truly worſe than we ſhould be, that we may not be deemed worſe than we ſeem?

How can we more gratifie the Enemy of our Salvation, than by approving our ſelves in truth to be what he would falſly challenge us to be, Mockers of God, and Traitors to our own Soul?

Is it not a vain thing to regard that kind of Cenſure, which it is impoſſible for any Man to eſcape, upon other Terms than of being very naughty? for wicked Men will never fail to load thoſe with this Charge who will
1 Pet. 4. 4. not comply with their Follies, and *run with them to the ſame exceſs of Riot*, or are any-wiſe better than themſelves; it is inevitable for a ſtaunch Man not to be ſtigmatized for a Hypocrite by them.

2 Cor. 1. 12. We have certainly more reaſon to be ſatisfied with the ſure Conſcience
1 John 3. 21. and Senſe of our own Integrity, than to be moved with the preſumptuous Aſſertions of any Wretch devoid of Juſtice or Charity: His Cenſure being plainly Injurious, and contrary to all Rules of Equity, which preſcribe that no Man ſhould judge of things unknown, or uncertain, is utterly deſpicable.

1 John 3. 20. The Teſtimony of God (*who is greater than our Hearts*) perfectly know-
1 Theſſ 2. 4. ing our Sincerity, may abundantly ſupport us; it is a great wrong to
Gal. 1. 10. him for us to value the raſh Suſpicions of Men, when we are ſecure of his
Col. 3. 23. Knowledge, who *ſeeth all our Works*, and *trieth our Hearts*; who hath ſaid,
Eph. 6. 5. that *if we commit our way to him*, and *truſt in him*, he *will bring forth our*
1 Cor. 4. 4. *Righteouſneſs as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon day.*
Pſal. 37. 4—

It is certainly better to be called Hypocrite by Men for doing our Duty, than to be treated as a Hypocrite by God for neglecting it; for all thoſe
Matt. 24. 51. who upon any account do violate God's Laws; ſhall *have their Portion with the Hypocrites*, in that diſconſolate place, *where is weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.* And good reaſon; for indeed by thus avoiding Hypocriſie, we really do incur it; by ſeeking to preſerve an opinion of Sincerity, we forfeit the reality of it; by the practice of diſavowing the Fear of God; and Care of Goodneſs, we do conſtitute our ſelves certain Hypocrites, and Impoſtors; diſſembling our Thoughts, ſmothering our Conſcience, deluding our Neighbours with falſe Conceits of us, feigning that Indifference which we have not, pretending to act without regret or remorſe, which we cannot do; ſeeming otherwiſe than we are, ſignifying otherwiſe than we mean, doing otherwiſe than we judge fit, or like to do; that is, if we be not ſtark Infidels, or utterly void of Conſcience.

This is Hypocriſie turned the wrong ſide outward, diſguiſing a Man in a fouler Shape, and uglier Garb, than that which is natural and true.

And if we compare the two Hypocriſies, (that of pretending Conſcience, which we want, and this of denying Conſcience, which we have; that of ſeeming better than we are, this of ſeeming worſe than we may be) this in nature may well ſeem more vile, in tendency more dangerous, in effect more miſchievous than the other.

There is in both the ſame Falſhood, the ſame Prevarication, the like Contempt and Abuſe of God; but the Hypocrite of whom we ſpeak doth worſe things, more directly wrongful to God, more prejudicial to Goodneſs more harmful to the World.

The ſpecious Hypocrite counterfeiting Goodneſs, and *having a Form of Godlineſs, without the Power* and Reality *of it*, doth yield to God ſome part (the exteriour part) of his due Honour and Reſpect; but the ſneaking Hypocrite, diſowning Goodneſs, doth apparently deſert, ſlight and affront God;

God; the one ſerveth God with his Face, and his Voice, though *his Heart be far from him*; the other doth not ſo much as ſacrifice a carcaſs of Obedience to him; That may bring ſome Credit and Advantage to Goodneſs, ſtrengthen its Intereſt by his Vote and Countenance; this by not avowing it doth aſſuredly weaken its Reputation and Cauſe; that Hypocriſie, as ſuch is a private and ſingle Evil, whereby a Man doth indeed prejudice himſelf, but doth not injure his Neighbour, yea may edifie him by the appearing (which in this reſpect is the ſame with the real) Goodneſs of his Example; but this Hypocriſie is a general Miſchief, a ſcandalous Evil, a contagious Peſtilence, whereby a Man not only harmeth himſelf, but wrongeth many others, ſeducing them into Diſſoluteneſs, infecting the World with baſe Indifference to Good, and eaſineſs to comply with Sin.

It is indeed a ſad thing, that God and Goodneſs ſhould be deſerted upon this accompt; that moſt Men ſhould be ſo uncharitable, ſo unjuſt, ſo imprudent as to ſuſpect all good Men of Hypocriſie; as if it were incredible that any Man ſhould heartily love or fear God; (when it is rather ſtrange that any Man ſhould do otherwiſe) that any Man in good earneſt or otherwiſe than in Pretence and for ſiniſter Reſpects ſhould embrace Vertue (when it is marvellous, that a reaſonable Man ſhould decline it) that ſo many of themſelves inclinable to Goodneſs, ſhould be ſo weak as to be deterr'd from it by ſo vain an Apprehenſion; and that the Name of Hypocriſie ſhould drive away Piety; that it ſhould become deſirable, that Hypocrites might abound in the World, leſt Religion both in truth and ſhew ſhould be diſcarded.

In fine, we may otherwiſe ſuppreſs this odious Imputation, than by deſerting Goodneſs; we may demonſtrate our ſelves ſerious and ſincere by an inflexible adherence to it, in the continual Tenour of our Practice; and eſpecially in ſome inſtances of Duty, which are hardly conſiſtent with Hypocriſie, for no Man can hold long in a ſtrained Poſture; no Man will take much Pains, or Encounter great Difficulties, or ſuſtain grievous Hardſhips and Afflictions, croſs his Appetites, forego Gains, and Honours, for that which he doth not heartily like and love; he may counterfeit in Ceremonies and Formalities, but he will hardly feign Humility, Meekneſs, Patience, Contentedneſs, Temperance, at leaſt uniformly and conſtantly. Even the patient enduring this Cenſure will confute it, and wipe off the Aſperſion of Hypocriſie. Matt. 23. 23.

SER-

SERMON XXXV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not only in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.

6. ANother great Impediment of good Converſation before Men is a deſire of ſeeming courteous and civil; Men uſually conform to ſinful Practices, becauſe they would not be held Clowns, rude and diſtaſtful in Converſation; they would not give Offence to their Company, by claſhing with their Humour; by preferring their own Judgment, and ſeeming to be in their own Conceit wiſer and better than thoſe with whom they converſe; by provoking them to think they are held Fools or worſe by ſuch non-compliance.

This is an ordinary Snare to eaſie and ingenuous Natures; but the ground of it is very unreaſonable: For although in Matters of indifference, where Duty and Sin do not fall into conſideration, to be limber and ductile as can be (which is the Temper of the beſt Metal) to have no Humour of our own, or to reſign up all our Humour to the Will of our Company, to condeſcend unto, and comport with any thing; to raiſe no Faction or Debate, but preſently to yield to the ſwaying Vote; to *become all things to all men* in a ready Complaiſance, be Wiſdom and good Manners, doth argue good Nature, good Underſtanding, good Breeding; is a rightly gentile and obliging Quality:

Yet where Duty is concerned, where Sinning or not Sinning is the Caſe, there Courteſie hath no room; there it is vain to pretend any Engagement to Complaiſance.

For ſurely it is better to be held uncivil, than to be ungodly; it is far better Manners to offend any number of Men, than to be rude with God, to claſh with his Pleaſure, to offer Indignity and Injury to him; there can be no competition in the Caſe; no ſhadow of Reaſon, why we ſhould diſpleaſe God to pleaſe Men.

As it were more civil to offend ten thouſand Boors, (Peaſants) than to affront our King; ſo to offend ten thouſand Kings than to affront our God were in Policy more adviſeable, and in Equity more juſtifiable; ſo the Royal *Pſalmiſt* did judge; for *Princes* (ſaid he) *did ſit and ſpeak againſt me, but thy Servant did meditate in thy Statutes*; ſo *Moſes*, ſo *Samuel*, ſo *Elias*, ſo *Jeremy*, ſo *Daniel*, ſo the three noble Children, ſo the holy Apoſtles did conceive; who being Perſons otherwiſe very courteous and gentle, yet had not that conſideration of mighty Princes, as not rather to approve their Conſciences to God, than to comply with their Pleaſure, how much

Pſal. 119. 23. Matt. 10. 18.

leſs

leſs ſhould we upon pretence of courteſie toward inferiour perſons, in ordinary converſation tranſgreſs our duty?

Our own intereſt in ſuch caſes is too conſiderable to be ſacrificed to the conceit or pleaſure of any men; Our ſalvation is no matter, wherein formality of reſpect ſhould intervene, or have any weight; to gain or forfeit our eternal happineſs, is no buſineſs of complement or ceremony: It were a ſilly courteſie for a man to wait on his company to Hell; a wild point of gallantry, to be damned in complaiſance.

Who would take himſelf to be obliged in good manners to hold on the round in a cup of poiſon; to leap down after thoſe, who from blind inadvertency, or wilful perverſeneſs tumble into a gulf, to gaſh or ſtab himſelf in conformity to ſome deſperate folk? Much leſs can a man be engaged out of any ſuch regard, (in compliance with the miſtake, weakneſs, or pravity of others) to incur guilt, to provoke divine wrath, to expoſe his ſoul to utter ruine, to undergo a damage, for which all the world cannot make any reparation or amends?

Is it not far better to diſguſt, than to gratifie thoſe, who have ſo little conſideration of our welfare; who indeed are very diſcourteous and heinouſly rude, in offering to tempt us unto ſin, to deſire a compliance therein with them; to expect from us, that we ſhould adventure ſo much for their vain ſatisfaction?

Indeed, to gratifie ſuch perſons, were great and noble courteſie; but really to do it, we ſhould not go this way; for this is a ſpurious courteſie, rather conſpiracy and treachery, than courteſie.

It is in truth, at the bottom, great diſcourteſie (involving much unkindneſs, real abuſe, unmerciful inhumanity and cruelty) to ſecond, to countenance, to ſupport or encourage any man in doing that which manifeſtly tendeth unto his great prejudice, to his utter bane.

It is the trueſt civility (implying real humanity, genuine charity, faithful kindneſs, and tender pity) to ſtand off in ſuch caſes, and by refuſing (in a modeſt, gentle, diſcreet manner refuſing) to concur in ſin with our friends and companions, to check them, to warn them, to endeavour their amendment and retreat from pernicious courſes; to exerciſe that *compaſſion* toward them, which S. *Jude* calleth *pulling them out of the fire.* Jud. 22, 23.

In ſuch caſes to repel them, yea to reprove them, is the greateſt favour we can ſhew them; it is not only ſafe for our ſelves, but kind to them to obſerve St. *Paul's* precept, *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*; for which deportment whenever they come to themſelves, and ſoberly reflect on things, they will thank and bleſs us; and it will happen, as the *Wiſeman* ſaith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterward ſhall find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue.* Eph. 5. 11, 7. Prov. 28. 23.

In fine, if we throughly ſcan the buſineſs, we ſhall find, that commonly it is not abundance of courteſie, but a defect of charity, or of conſcience, or of courage, which diſpoſeth us to reſervedneſs, or to concurrence upon ſuch occaſions, in regard to unallowable practices.

7. Another ſnare which catcheth and holdeth us in open practice of ſin, or neglect of duty, is deference to the opinion, authority, cuſtom, or example of others; to the common opinion, to the authority of great and leading perſons, to the faſhion of the world, and prevalent humour of the age.

A man (not conſulting or not confiding in his own reaſon) is apt to credit the vogue, to defer a kind of veneration to the general ſentiments of

men (eſpecially of men qualified) apprehending that allowable or tolerable, which men commonly by their practice ſeem to approve. He is prone to ſuſpect his own judgment of miſtake, when it doth thwart the opinion of ſo many; and hardly can have the heart to oppoſe his ſingle apprehenſions againſt ſo common notions.

——illos Defendit numerus. Juv. *Sat.* 12. 46. Ecclus 16.17.

The commonneſs of ſin, and multitude of offenders, doth in a manner authorize and warrant it, doth at leaſt ſeem to excuſe and extenuate it.

A man eaſily conceiteth himſelf ſafe enough, while he is in the herd, while he walketh in the road, when he hath the broad coverlet of general uſage to ſhrowd him from blame: He doth at leaſt fanſie conſolation in undergoing a doom with ſo many.

But upon many accompts, this is a very fallacious and dangerous ground of practice.

Ant. 9. §. 18. 11. §. 4. §. 3. *Argumentum peſſimi tuba.* Sen. *de vit. B.* 2.

For multitudes are no good authors of opinion, or guides of practice.

Wiſe men have ever been apt to ſuſpect that to be bad, which is moſt commonly admired and affected.

Nothing is more vulgarly noted, than the injudiciouſneſs, the blindneſs, the levity, temerity, and giddineſs of the vulgar; temper, inclination, appetite, intereſt, and the like perverting biaſſes have moſt ſway on them; any ſpecious appearance, any ſlight motive, any light rumour doth ſerve to perſuade them any thing, to drive them any whither.

All ages have deplored the paucity of wiſe and good men; the genuine diſciples of our Lord, and *ſons of wiſdom*, have ever been *puſillus grex*, *a ſmall flock*: Our Lord hath told us, that *wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*

Matt. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. Rom. 9. 27. Iſa. 10. 22.

Wherefore popular uſe is no good argument of truth or right; nor can yield any warrant, or any colour for infringing God's law: No *plebiſcitum* can be of force againſt it.

God never did allow the people to exempt themſelves or us from their loyalty, or obedience to his laws; they are univerſally obligatory; he hath *commanded all men to repent*; he hath threatned that otherwiſe *all ſhall periſh*; and that *tribulation and anguiſh* ſhall be *upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil.*

Acts 17. 30. Luke 13. 3. Rom. 9. 12. Rom. 2. 9.

Exod. 23. 2. Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this world.* Iſa. 8. 11. 1 John 2. 15. *Love not the world ——* Iſa 8. 10. Prov. 1. 10. Iſa. 1. 4.

He by expreſs prohibitions hath obviated all ſuch pretences and pleas; *Thou ſhalt not* (ſaith he) *follow a multitude to do evil*; and, *Say ye not a confederacy—— neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid,* (fear not to diſſent and diſcoſt *from the way of this people.*) And, *If ſinners entice thee,* (how many ſoever they be, though it be *a ſinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers*) *conſent thou not.*

Indeed if we conſider it, it is ſo far from excuſing ſin, that it is an aggravation thereof, that we therein conſpire with others, and the more the worſe: To oppoſe God ſingly, is not quite ſo criminal, as to join with a rout in hoſtility and rebellion againſt him; for hereby God's authority is more ſhaken, and his honour more rudely violated; hereby we do not only ſin our ſelves, but contribute to the ſin of others, encourage them to it, and uphold them in it by our patronage.

Hereby we become acceſſory to the degeneracy and general apoſtaſie of the age.

Hereby we do join our forces to pull down God's judgments on our Country, and by promoting general corruption, induce general vengeance.

The

The multitude of ſinners is ſo far from ſheltring any one from wrath, that it ſurely draweth it upon all; forcing the Almighty not only for the aſſertion of his own authority, and vindication of his honour; but for the good of the people, and *purgation of the* world, to pour forth remarkable vengeance. Iſa. 1. 25. *I will purge away the droſs,*——

For example: In the time of *Noah* did *God ſpare the old world* when *all fleſh had corrupted its way upon the earth*, did that ſtave off God's wrath, or ſtop the deluge? No, it did grievouſly provoke him, it did in a manner neceſſitate him *to deſtroy man from the face of the earth*; *bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.* Gen. 6. 12. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Gen. 6. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 5.

Did the number of ſinners in *Sodom* prevent vengeance on them? Was it not that which did *condemn them to an overthrow* ſo diſmal, pulling down fire and brimſtone on them? 2 Pet. 2. 6.

What was the reaſon of that woful captivity, into which *Iſrael* was carried? Was it not becauſe they *were all grievous revolters*, and had ſo generally conſpired in wickedneſs, that the *Prophet* could ſay, *Run ye to and fro through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh the truth, and I will pardon it*? Was it not this, which did wring from God that ſentence, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?* Jer. 6. 28. Jer. 5. 1. Jer. 5. 29.

When the caſe is ſuch in any community, as it was in *Iſrael*, when God ſaid, *From the ſoal of the foot even to the head there is no ſoundneſs in it*, then judgment is neceſſary, and it muſt aſſuredly follow, *Your country is deſolate*—— Then God, his patience being tired, and his goodneſs unſupportably abuſed, will cry out, *Ah, I will eaſe me of my adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* Iſa. 1. 6. Iſa. 1. 7.

God, as Governour of the world, in diſcharge of his office, for clearing his honour, for aſſuring his majeſty, out of regard to publick good, for the ſafety and welfare of his ſubjects, is concerned to chaſtiſe notorious, ſcandalous, and infectious ſin: He may reſerve private ſins for the final doom, when *the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be brought to light, and the counſels of hearts manifeſted*, and all things ſhall receive juſt award and recompence; but it is expedient to puniſh publick ſins publickly: They who *declare their ſin as Sodom*, with outrageous impudence, are like to find a puniſhment like that in a common vengeance. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Iſa. 3. 9.

We ſhould therefore in ſuch a caſe be the more careful of our converſation, more ſhy of ſinful compliance with others, for preventing publick calamity; for that our ſingle piety and innocence (or the goodneſs of a few) may ſave our Country, together with our ſelves, from wrath and ruine; ſeeing it is the gracious method of God, in regard to a few righteous men, to ſpare the reſt; to releaſe a Nation from deſerved puniſhment; for if in *Sodom* had been found ten righteous perſons, it had eſcaped that horrible deſtruction; And *Iſrael* in *Hezekiah*'s time (although in a very great and general corruption of that age) by a few good men did avoid the like doom; according to that of the *Prophet*, *Except the Lord of hoſts had left unto us a very ſmall remnant, we ſhould have been as Sodom.* Gen. 38. 32. Iſa. 1. 9. Lam. 3. 22.

The righteouſneſs of one *Noah* did ſave the race of mankind from being extinct:

The zeal of one *Phinehas* did ſtop that plague, which had devoured *Iſrael*; *Phinehas* (ſaid God himſelf) *the ſon of Eleazar hath turned my wrath away from the children of Iſrael; while he was zealous for my ſake among them, that I conſumed not the children of Iſrael in my jealouſie.* Num. 25. 11. Pſal. 106. 30.

If there had been ſuch another publick Patron of Piety, at the time when *Iſrael* was ſo ſeverely puniſhed by deliverance into captivity, it would have obſtructed that lamentable event: God himſelf ſo teſtified; for, *I ſought* (ſaid he) *for a man among them, that would make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none; therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them*——

Ezek. 22. 30, 31.

and, *Run ye to and fro* —— (ſaid he again) *Seek—if ye can find a man—in Jeruſalem* —— *and I will pardon it.*

Jer. 5. 1.

Wherefore beſide regard to our own welfare, a conſideration of publick good, charity toward the World, a compaſſion of our Country ſhould withhold us from conſpiring in common tranſgreſſions, or omiſſions of duty.

God will not overſee us. Eccleſ. 16. 17.

If we ſin with all, we muſt ſuffer with all; nor will the having ſo much company in ſuffering yield any true comfort to us; *Socios habuiſſe doloris* (to have companions in ſorrow) is in it ſelf a pitiful ſolace, and an unworthy one, ſavouring of inhumane malignity; for our fellows will bear no ſhare with us, or take off any thing from the burthen of our pains, which will be equally to them and us extreme.

Can it be any conſiderable ſatisfaction, that we are ſick of an epidemical diſeaſe, that ſweepeth away multitudes about us and with us?

Is it better for one part, that the whole body is overſpread with a noiſom leproſie? that its fellow-members are tortured with grievous anguiſh?

Can the ſoreſt pains of our brethren cure the akings of our heart, aſſuage the pangs of our conſcience, or ſlack the conſuming flames beneath?

What advantage can we enjoy from going down to hell in a troop? What eaſe ſhall we find there from being encompaſſed with the doleful groans, the piercing ſhrieks, and diſmal howlings of fellow-ſufferers in that infernal dungeon?

Alas! will it not rather augment our pains, to hear the ſore complaints, the fierce accuſations, the deſperate curſes of thoſe, whom our compliance hath engaged, or encouraged, or confirmed and hardned in that wicked practice, which did throw them into that diſconſolate caſe?

8. Another principle (near of kin to the former) is a diſlike of ſingularity, and ſolitude; together with the conſequences and imputations uſually cleaving thereto.

One would not be a man by himſelf; to be gazed on, to be hooted at as a kind of prodigy, to be deemed an extravagant, odd, humourous, fantaſtick perſon, conceited of his own opinion, addicted to his own way, arrogating to himſelf a liberty of croſſing and condemning, or contemning the world; therefore he runneth along with the age, complying with its ſinful cuſtoms, and naughty faſhions.

He is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other mens, his ways are of another faſhion. Sap. 2. 15, &c.

But this is a vain Principle; for really to be ſingular is no fault, to be held ſo is no diſgrace; it is rather in many caſes laudable and honourable; and if in any moſt reaſonable, 'tis in this.

Doth not ſingularity, or paucity, encreaſe the price and eſtimation of every valuable thing? What maketh a jewel, but rarity? What but that maketh a diamant more precious than a peble?

Do not men for ſingular eminency in any art, skill, faculty, endowment, gain credit and renown? What recommended to poſterity the names of *Apelles*, *Praxiteles*, *Phidias*, but excelling in their art beyond the ordinary

ordinary rate? What gave to *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero* their eſteem, but a ſingular knack of eloquence? To what did *Alexander* and *Cæſar* owe their fame, but to an extraordinary valour? Whence got *Socrates* ſuch a name, but from his ſingular wiſdom? Whence *Fabricius*, *Ariſtides*, *Cato*, but from their ſingular integrity?

Why then ſhould it be a diſcouragement or reproach to be ſingular or extraordinary in the nobleſt of all faculties, that of living well, in the moſt excellent of all perfections, that of vertue?

In truth a man is hardly capable of a greater commendation than this, that he is ſingularly good; that he ſurpaſſeth the vulgar level, and mounteth near Heaven in the divineſt qualities; that no bad example or faſhion hath been able to ſeduce or corrupt him; this ſhould render him to be moſt highly eſteemed, and moſt dearly cheriſhed, as a choice ornament of the world, as a moſt uſeful inſtrument of good to mankind.

It were deſirable that vertue were more common in the world, but ſurely its being more rare doth render it more admirable, more illuſtrious, more glorious.

Heroical vertue is therefore ſuch, becauſe ſo few do attain, or can reach it;

——*pauci quos æquos amavit*
Jupiter,

A few, who by ſpecial aſſiſtance of God's Grace, and by extraordinary reſolution, do ſurmount the obſtacles which are ſet againſt it.

It was well ſaid of St. *Bernard*, *To be good among good men hath ſafety; but to be ſuch among bad men hath alſo praiſe*; (a man will be ſaved by that, but he ſhould be commended for this) *that hath as much facility as it hath ſecurity, this is of as much worth as difficulty.*

Inter bonos, bonus eſſe ſalutem habet, inter malos verò & laudem; illud tantæ facilitatis eſt, quantæ & ſecuritatis; hoc tantæ virtutis, quantæ & difficultatis. Bern. *Ep.* 25.

Indeed if we conſider the nature of things, or conſult the hiſtory of times, we ſhall find that vertue muſt be, and ever hath been liable to this imputation; it is commonly ſo hard and hazardous to be good in any notable degree, that few will take the pains, or undergo the hardſhips requiſite to attain or exerciſe it.

Hence the beſt men, (who are ſuch not according to the blind conjecture of men, but in God's ſure eſteem) are an elect, and peculiar ſort of people, a few choice perſons cull'd out of a great lump of thoſe, who either reject Religion, or embrace it only in verbal profeſſion, or formal ſhew. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Hence it hath been the obſervation, and complaint of all times,

Rari quippe boni. Juv. *Sat.* 13. 28.

Hence the moſt renowned men for goodneſs, and who by God's ſpecial care have been recommended to us as patterns thereof, have been very ſingular in it; and their ſingularity did much enhance the price of their goodneſs.

It is ſaid of *Enoch*, that *he walked with God*; but it ſeemeth with ſmall, or no company beſide; otherwiſe it would not have been ſo particularly recorded of him. Gen. 5. 22.

Noah was content to be a man by himſelf, *a preacher of righteouſneſs* againſt the vogue, and a practicer thereof againſt the ſtream of his whole age; for, *thee* (ſaid God of him, that is, thee alone) *have I ſeen righteous before me in this generation*: He was no leſs ſingular in his goodneſs, than in his ſalvation. Gen. 7. 1.

Abraham

Abraham had no common qualities, which moved God to pick him
Gen. 12. 1. out, and ſeparate him from the reſt of mankind (to ſingle him *from his kindred and country*) to confer ſpecial graces and bleſſings on him.

2 Pet. 2. 7. *Lot* had *his righteous ſoul vexed with the filthy converſation of the wicked*, which did encloſe him; yet ſo that he did retain a ſound and clear integrity among them.

Job had this teſtimony from God, examining *Satan* concerning him,
Job 1. 8. *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him on the earth; a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil?*

What was the reſolution of *Joſhua?* Did he value being ſole or ſingular in his practice? No, for propounding to his people whether they would chuſe God or not, he told them, that however it were, although all of them ſhould forſake God, he was reſolved to ſtick faſt to him, not re-
Joſh. 24. 15. garding their practice; *But* (ſaid he) *as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord*; that indeed was nobly reſolved; it was a reſolution worthy of ſuch an *Heroe*, to ſtand alone in ſo good and wiſe a choice againſt his whole Nation. It was a reſolution ſuitable to that his behaviour, which
Joſh. 14. 8. he expreſſed in theſe words, *My brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God*; in regard to which his camerade *Caleb*, being of the ſame ſpirit with him, is called
Num. 14. 24. a man *of another ſpirit*; different from, and above the mean ſpirit of his fellows.

What was *David?* Was he not a man by himſelf? Was he not like one, of whom the Poet ſaith,

Juv. *Sat.* 13.
Egregium ſanctumque virum ſi cerno, bimembri
Hoc monſtrum puero, vel fœtæ comparo mulæ.

* A Wonder. *N. Tr.* Pſal. 71. 7. 119. 51. 1 Pet. Ἐν ᾧ ξενίζ. So he telleth us, *I* (ſaith he) *am become as it were a* * *monſter unto many, but my ſure truſt is in thee.*

Did *Elias*, to ſhun the imputation of ſingularity, or in regard to common practice, ſwerve from his faithful adherence to God's ſervice; al-
1 Kings 19. 10 though he did paſſionately reſent and bewail his caſe? No; for, *I have*, ſaid he, *been very jealous for the Lord of hoſts; for the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and ſlain thy prophets with the ſword; and I, even I only am left, and they ſeek my life to take it away.*

Lam. 3. 14. What was the caſe of *Jeremy?* *I* (ſaith he) *was a deriſion to all my people, and their ſong all the day*; yet did he maintain his integrity, and was
Jer. 1. 18. *a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall againſt the whole land;*
Murus aheneus. *againſt the kings of Judah, againſt the princes thereof, and againſt the people of the land.*

What was the condition of our *Lord?* Was not he σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον, *a prodigie ſpoken againſt* by all, againſt whom *both Herod and*
Luke 2. 34. Heb. 12. 3. Acts 4. 27. Iſa. 63. 3. John 12. 37-- John 16. 32. Matt. 26. 31, 56. *Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Iſrael were gathered together*; who *trod the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with him*; who in his life was regarded by few, and at his death (when he yielded his great atteſtation to truth and righteouſneſs) was deſerted by all?

What was the *Apoſtles* condition? Were they not ſingular men? Were
Acts 28. 22. 2 Cor. 4. 9. Heb. 10. 33. 1 Cor. 1. 26. not they held *a Sect, every where ſpoken againſt*, and impugned with all violence of ſpirit and rage? Were not they *made a ſpectacle to the world*, to be gazed at with ſcorn and reproach? Did not they (a few, ſimple, poor, weak

weak folk) in doctrine and practice croſs and controll the world, confuting, reproving, condemning the generality of men, of errour, of folly, of wickedneſs?

It can therefore be no juſt blame or reaſonable diſcouragement to appear ſingular in the practice of vertue.

Such a ſingularity is no good argument of fond conceitedneſs, of wilful humour, of arrogant pride. For,

Can it be fond conceitedneſs to follow the dictates of the beſt reaſon, to obſerve the advices of the wiſeſt men in all times, to follow the direction and conduct of infinite wiſdom, to embrace that which in moſt caſes natural light, common ſenſe, and continual experience do approve? Is it not wildneſs to do otherwiſe, though all ſhould do it?

Can it be wilful humour to hold faſt our beſt intereſt, our trueſt comfort, our eternal ſalvation? Is it not rather ſo, to comply with *a perverſe generation*, in running headlong to their own ruine?

Can it be pride or arrogance, to acknowledge our Maker; to be loyal and dutiful to our heavenly Sovereign; to fear the Almighty God, to ſubmit to his will, to *tremble at his word*, to *be afraid of his judgments*, to ſhun his fierce anger and ſevere vengeance?

Is it a bad ambition to ſeek that honour and immortal glory, which God doth offer; to ſhun that everlaſting ſhame and contempt, which he doth menace?

Is it not rather monſtrous preſumption, and enormous vanity, to conſort and conſpire with rebels againſt God's law, with deſpiſers of his grace?

In fine, when the moſt men are fooliſh and vain, when the world is depraved and diſſolute, it is neceſſary that the beſt reaſon ſhould be called humour, and the wiſeſt men ſhould be deemed extravagant; that the beſt things ſhould be ſlighted, and the beſt perſons repreſented with odious characters: But hence to renounce wiſdom and goodneſs is abominably abſurd; as if we ſhould therefore put out our light, becauſe it is night about us; or in deep winter ſhould put off our clothes among the wild *Indians*.

9. Of affinity to the foregoing Principles is this moſt plauſible apology for ſmothering our conſcience, namely, a prudential apprehenſion, that we ſhall not come off well in openly avowing and abetting goodneſs, ſo as to do any good, or ſervice to it thereby; but ſhall thereby rather work prejudice and diſſervice to it.

The Age (will ſuch a wiſe man ſay) is incorrigibly degenerate; wickedneſs is not only bold and impudent, but even outragiouſly inſolent; ſo that to appear ſtrictly good, is a kind of ſcandal; to pretend conſcience for our rule of action, is to be ridiculous; to patronize duty, is to provoke Job 12. 4. ſcorn and obloquy; to mention religion, is to proſtitute and profane it; to concern God in our doing, is to expoſe his moſt ſacred and venerable Name to irriſion and foul abuſe.

Such is the poſture of things, that of all the ſects and factions which divide the world, that of *Epicurean* ſcorners and mockers is become the moſt formidable; with diſdainful pride inſulting and vapouring over the profeſſors of religion; perſecuting all ſoberneſs of mind and ſtaunchneſs of manners with a fierce rage, and a kind of Satanick zeal.

The ſtate of the world being like to that, when the holy *Pſalmiſt* cried Pſal. 94. 3, 4. out, *Lord, how long ſhall the wicked, how long ſhall the wicked triumph?* 52. 1. 10. 3. *How long ſhall they utter and ſpeak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boaſt themſelves.*

In

Matt. 7. 6. In ſuch a caſe, is it not ſeaſonable to obſerve our *Lord*'s advice, *not to give that which is holy unto dogs, nor to caſt our pearls before ſwine*; not to expoſe good doctrine, and holy practice, to ſcurrillous and ſenſual people, who will ſnarl and bark at it, will ſcorn and trample on it, will bite and tear you for it?

Is it not then wiſdom rather fairly to retreat, withdrawing our vertue into a ſafe retirement, than by openly conteſting for it againſt overmatching forces, to hazard its being baffled and abuſed, its being trampled on, and triumphed over, by ſcornful pride and malice?

In ſuch a world to oppoſe impiety, what is it but attempting to ſtop a torrent, to allay a ſtorm, to gape againſt an oven, to blow againſt the wind, to kick againſt the pricks?

But if this caſe be rightly weighed, it rather ſtrongly may engage us to an open profeſſion and practice of the ſtricteſt vertue, than excuſe us from it.

Eph. 5. 15. Phil. 2. 5. St. *Paul* doth enjoin us *to walk accurately, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time*, for this reaſon, *becauſe the days are evil*; and *that we ſhould be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, ſhining among them as lights in the world; and* * *holding forth the word of life.*

* (Or, holding faſt, ἐπέχοντες)

And great reaſon for it; for the worſe the world is, the more need there is of good patterns to inſtruct and guide it, to admoniſh and excite it to goodneſs.

If the days are evil, it is high time that we ſhould apply our beſt endeavours to the mending of them.

Spectа juvenis—— in ea tempora natus es, quibus formare animum expediat conſtantibus exemplis. Tac. *Ann.* 16.

If vertue be ſo near loſt, or ſo quite gone from among us, it is needful that we ſhould preſently ſeek to recover, or to retrive it.

If goodneſs be ſo hardly preſſed by oppoſition, then hath every good man the more reaſon to appear ſtrenuouſly in its defence, the more are we engaged to haſten with all our might to its relief and ſuccour from irrecoverable oppreſſion.

Every one ſhould labour to raiſe a bank againſt that inundation, which threatneth to overthrow and overwhelm all.

Shall we endure to ſee the adverſary of our welfare to carry all before him, without any oppoſition or obſtruction? Shall we ſuffer iniquity to enjoy a quiet reign, to root and ſettle it ſelf in its uſurpation, to raiſe it ſelf a title of long occupancy and preſcription againſt goodneſs?

Is it not then more generous to avow our friendſhip to vertue, and to abet it in our patronage, when it is under the hatches, and crieth for our aid? Is it not vile treachery in ſuch a caſe to deſert it?

Is it not gallant then *to reſiſt ſin*, and check wickedneſs, when it is ſo high and rampant?

Who will not be vertuous (or endeavour at leaſt to appear ſuch) when vertue is in faſhion and requeſt; when it flouriſheth in reputation, when all the world doth countenance and abet it? Who will not ſhun or diſown wickedneſs, when it is commonly odious and deſpicable? Who will *not help the Lord againſt* weak adverſaries?

Jud. 5. 23.

But to embrace vertue upon greateſt diſadvantages, to diſclaim vice in its triumphant proſperity, this is indeed brave and maſculine.

He is a worthy man indeed, who can keep the field among ſo many ſtout enemies, who can ſtand upright *in a crooked generation*; who can deſpiſe the ſcorn, defie the rage, bear up againſt the impudence and malignity of vain, baſe, wretched men, combining to ſupplant and extirpate goodneſs.

Nor

Nor have we reaſon in proceeding thus to deſpair of good Succeſs; we need not fear thereby to expoſe the credit, or endanger the intereſt of Goodneſs. For,

How can we fail of proſpering in the maintenance of God's Cauſe, and ſpecial Concern? Although Men may commonly deſert him, yet doth he not utterly forſake them, or give over the government of the World; he may let the Reins lie a little looſe, but he doth not put them out of his Hands; his Power cannot be abated, his Providence can never ſleep; though he is ſo patient in ſuffering wicked Men to provoke him, yet he will not be *ſlack* in aſſiſting good Men, who take his part, and undertake to maintain his Honour; Aſſuredly he will help them, who *help him againſt the mighty.*

In this ſervice *one will chaſe a thouſand, and two put ten thouſand to flight*; One *David* will knock down never ſo many Philiſtines reproaching God's Name; One *Phinehaz* will repreſs the petulancy of a whole Nation; One *Jeremy* ſhall be *a brazen Wall againſt a whole Land*; God will make it good to ſuch an one, *They ſhall fight againſt thee, but they ſhall not prevail againſt thee; for I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to deliver thee.* Deut. 32. 30. Joſh. 23. 10. Num. 25. 3. Jer. 1. 19. 15. 20. 20. 11.

One ſober Man, in defence of Vertue, is able to diſcomfit all the Hectors, the huffing Blades, and boiſterous Ruffians in the World; attacking them with ſound Diſcretion, and ſteady Reſolution: For all their Bravery and Confidence, they are eaſily Mated, and being like their Sire, if you *reſiſt them, they will flee from you:* A prudent, ſeaſonable, ſmart check will quaſh their ſpurious Courage, and giddy Audacity. Their contempt of Goodneſs is but feigned; they cannot really for their Hearts deſpiſe it; there is ſtamped on their Souls and Conſciences ſuch a reſpect, ſuch an awe thereof, which they cannot quite race out; wherefore if you briskly repreſent it to them, and challenge their reverence to it, they cannot but ſuccumb, their own Mind and Conſcience joining to back your Reproof; ſo that if you cannot reclaim them, you ſhall however repreſs them; if you cannot correct their Vice, you ſhall yet confound their Impudence; *For ſo* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *it is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to ſilence the Ignorance of fooliſh Men*; and, *Having a good Conſcience, that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your Converſation in Chriſt.* Jam. 4. 7. Jer. 20. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 15. 3. 16. Tit. 2. 8.

It is only a ſneaking, or a timorous pretence to Vertue, which they contemn, but they will admire thoſe who ſtifly adhere to it, and ſtoutly maintain it.

We ſhall therefore expoſe Vertue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly ſlinking from it, when occaſion requireth an open acknowledgment and exemplary practice of it.

If the World is ſo very bad, it will not be worſe for our attempt to better it; it will be ſo much at leaſt better, that one therein hath that worthy purpoſe.

It was bad, when *Noah* preached Righteouſneſs to it.

It was bad, when *Elias* was ſo zealous for the Lord of Hoſts.

It was bad, when *Jeremy* was derided for declaring God's Will, and exhorting to Repentance.

They were very bad times, when all the Prophets did ſtrive ſo earneſtly to reclaim Men from their Wickedneſs; being reproached and perſecuted for doing ſo, but not deterred from doing it; the reſentment they had of the badneſs of Times did not make them abandon the means of its recovery from it.

1 John 5. 19. *The whole World did lie in wickedneſs* when the Apoſtles did undertake the Reformation of it.

None calleth for juſtice, nor any pleadeth for truth —— Iſa. 59. 4.

In fine, if Men generally upon ſuch accompts of deſpairing Prudence neglect to own Goodneſs, what muſt the conſequence be? what, but that Piety ſhall be caſhiered, that Vertue ſhall be diſcarded, that Conſcience ſhall be quite exploded and exterminated from the World; that conſequently an horrible deluge of various Miſchiefs, a general prevalence of Lewdneſs and Luxury, of Fraud and Violence, of Faction and Tumult; a violation of all Faith and Friendſhip, a diſſolution of all Order and Peace will enſue?

Jer. 5. 29. Iſa. 1. 24. 59. 17.

And what muſt grow upon this ſtate of things? what but another floud of Judgments and woful Vengeance; when God's Patience hath been tried to the utmoſt, and his Goodneſs tired with bearing ſuch a load of Abominations, he will be forced to cry out, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things? ſhall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?*

Stulta caliditas, perversè imitata prudentiam. Cic. de Offic. 3. p. 143.

10. Another Principle of diſpenſing with Conſcience in publick Duties, and Converſation before Men, is a kind of perverſe Wiſdom, or ſubtile Craft, affecting the name of Diſcretion.

Men ſee there are divers Inconveniences attending the profeſſion of reſpect to God, and conſcience in all their doings; that the World may diſlike and diſeſteem them, that divers Perſons will hate, malign, reproach and perſecute them for it; that they may chance to be croſſed in their Deſigns, and loſe Profits and Preferments thereby; therefore they deem it adviſeable to decline it in open view, making up the defect by adoring and ſerving God in private.

Thus they think to ſalve all, by maintaining a neutrality, and compounding the buſineſs, yielding an open conformity to the World, and reſerving a ſecret regard to God; ſinning publickly, and privately repenting; retaining their Credit, Quiet, Eaſe, Pleaſure with their Conſcience, and peace of Mind: affecting ſome Piety, but avoiding the ſcandal of it.

Gal. 5. 11.

They would hold fair with both ſides, ſo that neither the World ſhould perſecute them for croſſing its Humour, nor God puniſh them for tranſgreſſing his Will.

They drive a ſubtile trade, hoping to gain on all hands, both the benefits of the other, and the advantages of this World; to ſave their Soul, and ſerve their worldly Intereſt together:

This they would believe a point of ſpecial Wiſdom; preſcribed by *Solomon*, *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe, for why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou fooliſh, why ſhouldeſt thou die before the time?* Eccleſ. 7. 16, 17.

But this rooking trick, to hedge thus, and ſave Stakes, to play faſt and looſe, to dodge and ſhuffle with God, God doth not like, nor will ſuffer himſelf to be gull'd with it.

1 Kings 18. 21. He will not be ſatisfied with ſuch a mongrel, partial, and *halting* Service.

He will not allow us to with-hold that half of his Service (the external, viſible part thereof) which is moſt honourable to him, and moſt beneficial to our Neighbour.

Pſal. 12. 2. Jam. 1. 8. 4. 8.
2 Chron. 12. 33.
1 Tim. 3. 8. Δίγλωσσ.
Pſal. 38. 37. *Their heart was not whole with him.* (O. Tr.)
Deut. 18. 13. Job 1. 8.
Pſal. 44. 18. 119. 51.
2 Chron. 34. 2. Job 23. 11.
Matt. 6. 24. Luke 16. 13. } Δυσὶ κυρίοις.

He cannot endure a double Heart, a double Face; one looking upward to Heaven, another downward to the Earth.

He exacteth from us an integrity of Heart, and perfection of Obedience; that we ſhould love him with our whole Heart, that we ſhould be *perfect with him*, that we ſhould walk uprightly, not *deflecting to the right hand or left* from our Duty.

He

He will not endure, that we ſhould hold amity, or correſpondence with his Enemies; particularly with the World, the friendſhip whereof he hath declared inconſiſtent with his favour; and that it is a ſpiritual adultery to impart any of our affections to it; according to that of St. *James*, *Ye Adulterers, and adultereſſes; know ye not that the friendſhip of the World is enmity with God; ſo that whoſoever will be a friend of the World, becometh the enemy of God.* Jam. 4. 3. 1 John 2. 15. Καθίσται. (John 15. 19. 17. 14.)

We may ſhift as well as we can in the World, provided that we hold Innocence, and do not conſpire with it againſt God, by violation of our duty to him. *Be wiſe as Serpents, innocent as Doves*, Matt. 10. 16. (*As Lambs*, Luke 10. 3.) Pſal. 37. 38. *O. Ir.* Phil. 2. 5. Rom. 16. 19. Σοφὲς εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.

They reproach good Men as ſuperſtitious; who are afraid of inviſible Powers; who let go things in hand (preſent Intereſts and Pleaſures) for a reverſion and hope.

As if God's Word were not ſufficient Security: As if we may not as well rely upon things conſpicuous to Reaſon, as thoſe which are obvious to ſenſe.

If Chriſtianity be plainly falſe, they ſay well; but if it be true, very abſurdly; yea, if probable, very imprudently; yea, if poſſible, not wiſely. Ἄτοποι. 2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

They charge conſcientious Men with timorouſneſs, faint-heartedneſs.

It is timorouſneſs or blameable fear to dread things without reaſon, things no wiſe formidable, which cannot hurt us; ſuch a timorous Man is he, that out of fear of Men, (of diſpleaſing them, of ſuffering by them, of their reproach, &c.) tranſgreſſeth his Duty.

But to fear God is Wiſdom, Soberneſs, Duty, Vertue; 'tis handſome and honourable, becoming our Nature, our Condition; the paſſion of fear was chiefly put in us for this purpoſe, as its beſt uſe.

Is it Courage, and not rather Madneſs to provoke, to reſiſt, to challenge, to cope with the Almighty? Is it Courage to throw ones ſelf down a Precipice, to leap into the infernal Lake? Is it gallantry to dare tranſgreſs all Reaſon and Sobriety? Is it brave to be wild and ſenſeleſs, &c.?

It is true courage to reſiſt and repel Sin, aſſaulting a Man with whatever advantages; to dare to do well, although vain Men deride, and ſpiteful Men hate us for it.

It is a kind of Martyrdom to be ill uſed by the World for adhering to his Duty, and he hath a ſhare in that, *Bleſſed are they who ſuffer for righteouſneſs.*

In fine, it is a vain Prudence, to be thus politick with God; whereby we ſhall loſe the whole, or that part which is invaluable, out of preſumption to ſave a ſmall inconſiderable part. Matt. 10. 39. Ὁ εὑρὼν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, ἀπολέσει αὐτήν.

If this be prudence, *then* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *is the offence of the croſs ceaſed.* Gal. 5. 11.

Then our Lord preſcribed a fooliſh Condition. Matt. 10. 38. 16. 24.

Then were the Apoſtles very imprudent, who deſerted all, and ſuffered ſo much for their Conſcience; being content to ſecure their Spiritual Intereſt, and to obtain the eternal rewards of Piety; *chuſing the better part, which could not be taken from them.* Phil. 3. 8. Luke 10. 42.

What the true Wiſdom is in ſuch caſes St. *James* hath told us, *Who is a wiſe Man, and endowed with knowledge among you? let him ſhew out of a good converſation his Works, with meekneſs of Wiſdom.* Jam. 3. 13.

SERMON XXXVI.

Of the Goodneſs of GOD.

PSALM CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to All, and his tender Mercies are over all his Work.

THE goodneſs of God is a frequented Theme; to many perhaps it may ſeem vulgar and trite; ſo that Diſcourſe thereon, like a Story often told, may be nauſeous to their Ears: but in truth neither can we ſpeak too much upon this moſt excellent Subject, nor ought we ever to be weary in hearing about it; for 'tis a ſign that the Palate of our Mind is diſtempered, if we do not with delight and affection reliſh any mention of Divine Goodneſs. Yea, the obſervation of Mens common practice would induce us to think, that either this point is not ſo well known, or but little believed, or at leaſt not well conſidered and applied. For how could we be ſo void of love to God, of gratitude toward Him, of faith and hope in Him, were we throughly perſuaded, did we ſeriouſly conſider, that He is ſo exceedingly good toward us? how can we be ſo inſenſible of the Benefits we enjoy, ſo diſtruſtful of finding Succours and Supplies in our Need, ſo diſſatisfied and diſcontented with what befalls us, if we conceive and weigh, that all things do proceed from, are guided and governed by immenſe Goodneſs? how alſo, if Men have ſuch an opinion of God impreſſed on their Minds, comes it to paſs that they are ſo little careful to reſemble and imitate him in Kindneſs, Bounty, and Mercy to one another? How is it in fine, that the moſt powerful Argument to all manner of good Practice, and the mightieſt aggravation of Sin, if well known and pondered, hath ſo little force and efficacy upon us? from Experience therefore this Argument may ſeem ſcarce ſufficiently inculcated. We may add, that Diſcouſe upon this Attribute (which above all other Attributes doth render God peculiarly admirable, and amiable) hath this ſpecial advantage beyond other Diſcourſes, that it doth, if our Hearts conſpire therewith, approach moſt nearly to the formal exerciſe of the moſt high and heavenly parts of Devotion, Praiſe and Thankſgiving; that it more immediately conduces to the breeding, the nouriſhing, the augmenting in us the beſt and nobleſt of pious Affections, love and reverence to God? truſt and hope in him; willing reſolutions to pleaſe and ſerve him; whence is conſequent, that we cannot too much employ our Thoughts, our Words, or our attention upon this Point. Beſide ſo much reaſon, we have alſo good

—Διὸς, ἓ πολλῶν ὄντων, ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, μᾶλλον ὅτως ὡς τὸ πάντας εὐεργέτειν ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

good Example to countenance us in ſo doing: we have the precedent of the holy *Pſalmiſt* reſolving to make it his conſtant and continual employment: *I will ſing* (ſaith he) *of the Mercies of the Lord; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulneſs to all Generations.* Pſal. 89. 1. And, *Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy Name for ever and ever*; (that bleſſing and praiſing God, the Context ſhews to have conſiſted eſpecially in the declaration of God's great goodneſs) and, *It is a good thing* (ſaith he again) *to give thanks unto the Lord, and to ſing praiſes unto thy Name, O thou moſt High; to ſhew forth thy loving kindneſs in the morning, and thy faithfulneſs every night.* Pſal. 145. 2. Pſal. 92. 1. Such were his Intentions, and ſuch his Judgment about this Practice; and we find him in effect true and anſwerable to them; Every Song of his, every Meditation, every exerciſe of Devotion chiefly harping upon this String; and he earneſtly wiſhes that others would conſent and conſort with him therein: he earneſtly exhorts and excites them thereto: *O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.* Pſal. 107. 8. Pſal. 106. 1. *Praiſe the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* That one Example might ſufficiently authorize this Practice; but we have innumerable others, and thoſe the higheſt that can be, to encourage and engage us thereto; even the whole Choire of Heaven, whoſe perpetual buſineſs and happy entertainment it is to contemplate with their Minds, to celebrate with their Voices the immenſe goodneſs of God; *they have* (as it is in the *Revelation*) *no reſt day or night from performing this office.* Apoc. 4. 8. Such is the ſubject of our Diſcourſe; the which our Text moſt plainly and fully expreſſes; aſſerting not only the goodneſs of God; but the univerſal and boundleſs extent thereof: *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or *his bowels of affection and pity*) *are over all his works.* And that God indeed is ſuch, we ſhall firſt endeavour to declare, then ſhall briefly apply the conſideration thereof to practice.

That God the Lord, and Maker of all things is of himſelf, in regard to all his Creatures, eſpecially to us Men, ſuperlatively good, that is diſpoſed never without juſt or neceſſary cauſe to harm us, and inclinable to do us all poſſible and befitting good, the univerſal frame of Nature, and the conſtant courſe of Providence do afford us ſufficient reaſon to conceive, and moſt frequent, moſt expreſs Teſtimonies of holy Scripture do more fully demonſtrate. There is no argument from natural effects diſcernible by us, which proveth God's Exiſtence, (and innumerable ſuch there are, every ſort of things well ſtudied may afford ſome) the which doth not together perſuade God to be very kind and benign; careful to impart to us all befitting Good, ſuitable to our natural Capacity and Condition; and unwilling that any conſiderable Harm, any extreme Want or Pain ſhould befal us (I interpoſe ſuch limitations, for that an abſolute, or univerſal and perpetual exemption from all kinds, or all degrees of Inconvenience, an accumulation of all ſorts of appearing good upon us, doth not become, or ſute our natural ſtate of being, or our rank in perfection among Creatures; neither all things being duly ſtated, and computed, will it turn to beſt account for us.) The beſt (no leſs convincing, than obvious) Arguments, aſſerting the exiſtence of a Deity are deduced from the manifold and manifeſt footſteps of admirable Wiſdom, Skill and Deſign apparent in the general Order, and in the particular frame of Creatures; the beautiful harmony of the whole, and the artificial contrivance of each part of the World; the which 'tis hardly poſſible that any unprejudiced and undiſtempered Mind ſhould conceive to proceed from blind

chance,

chance, or as blind neceſſity. But with this Wiſdom are always complicated no leſs evident marks of Goodneſs. We cannot in all that vaſt bulk of the Creation, and numberleſs variety of things diſcover any piece of meer Pomp, or dry Curioſity; every thing ſeems to have ſome beneficial tendency; according to which it confers ſomewhat to the need, convenience, or comfort of thoſe principal Creatures, which are endued with Senſe and Capacity to enjoy them. Moſt of them have a palpable relation to the benefit (to the ſubſiſtence, or delight) of living Creatures; and eſpecially in an ultimate relation to the benefit of Man; and the reſt, although their immediate uſe be not to our dim ſight ſo diſcernible, may therefore be reaſonably preſumed in their natural deſignation to regard the ſame end. Wherefore as upon conſideration of that ample proviſion, which is made in Nature for the neceſſary ſuſtenance, defence, and relief, for the convenience, delight, and ſatisfaction of every Creature, any Man, who is not careleſs or ſtupid, may be induced to cry out with the *Pſalmiſt*: Pſal. 104. 24. 33. 5. 119. 64. *O Lord, how manifold are thy Works, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all?* ſo 57. 10. 108. 4. may he with no leſs reaſon and ground after him pronounce and acknow- Pſal. 33. 5. 119. 64. ledge; *The Earth is full of the goodneſs of the Lord: The Earth, O Lord,* 57. 10. 108. 4. *is full of thy Mercy. Thy Mercy is great unto the Heavens; thy Mercy is* Pſal. 104. 10. *&c.* *great above the Heavens.* 'Tis indeed becauſe Divine Goodneſs is freely Pſal. 65. 11. 103. 4. diffuſive and communicative of it ſelf; becauſe eſſential Love is active, and fruitful in beneficence; becauſe higheſt excellency is void of all Envy, Selfiſhneſs, and Tenacity, that the World was produced ſuch as it was; thoſe Perfections being intrinſical to God's Nature, diſpoſed him to beſtow ſo much of Being, of Beauty, of Pleaſure upon his Creatures. Pſal. 104. 28. *He openeth his hand, they are filled with good:* 'Tis from God's open Hand, his unconfined Bounty and Liberality, that all Creatures do receive all that good which fills them, which ſatisfies their Needs, and ſatiates their Deſires. Every pleaſant Object we view, every ſweet and ſavoury Morſel we taſte, every fragrancy we ſmell, every Harmony we hear; the wholſome, the chearing, the uſeful; yea, the innocent and inoffenſive Qualities of every thing we do uſe and enjoy, are ſo many perſpicuous Arguments of Divine Goodneſs; we may not only by our reaſon collect it, but we even touch and feel it with all our Senſes.

The like concluſion may be inferr'd from the obſervation of Divine Providence. Every Signification, or Experiment, whence we may reaſonably infer that Divine Power and Wiſdom do concur in upholding, managing, and directing the general State of Things, or the particular Affairs of Men, being well examined and weighed, would afford reaſon apt to perſuade, that the Governour of the World is graciouſly affected toward his Creatures and Subjects. The general preſervation of things in their natural Conſtitution and Order; the diſpenſing conſtant viciſſitudes of Seaſon, ſo as may ſerve for the ſupply of our Needs; the maintaining ſuch a courſe of things in the World, that notwithſtanding the great irregularity of Will, and violence of Paſſion in ſo many Perſons, yet Men do ordinarily ſhift ſo as to live tolerably upon Earth in Peace and Safety, and enjoyment of competent accommodations for Life; with the Aids and Conſolations ariſing from mutual Society; the ſupports, encouragement, and rewards of Vertue many times in a ſtrange manner adminiſtred; the Reſtraints, Diſappointments, and ſeaſonable Chaſtiſements of Wickedneſs, eſpecially when it grows exorbitant and outrageous, unexpectedly intervening, with the Pſal. 28. 5. like paſſages of Providence, will, to him that ſhall *regard the works of the* Iſa. 5. 12. *Lord, and the operation of his hands,* ſufficiently declare as the other glorious Attributes (Wiſdom, Power, and Juſtice) ſo eſpecially the goodneſs

of

of him, who preſides over the World; aſſuring that he is a friend to the welfare, and diſlikes the Miſery of Mankind. He that ſhall well obſerve, and conſider how among ſo many fierce and hard-hearted, ſo many crafty and ſpiteful, ſo many domineering and devouring Spirits, the poor and weak, the ſimple and harmleſs ſort of People do however ſubſiſt, and enjoy ſomewhat, cannot but ſuſpect that an undiſcernible hand, full of Pity and Bounty, doth often convey the neceſſary ſupports of Life to them, doth often divert imminent Miſchiefs from them; cannot but acknowledge it credible, what the holy *Scripture* teacheth, that God is the Friend, and Patron, and Protector of thoſe needy and helpleſs People, *redeeming their Soul from deceit and violence*, (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks) that he is (as the *Prophet* expreſſeth it) *a ſtrength to the Poor, a ſtrength to the Needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the Storm, a ſhadow from the Heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a Storm againſt the Wall.* He that ſhall remark, how frequently in an unaccountable way, ſuccour and relief do ſpring up to juſt and innocent Perſons; ſo that in a whole Age (as the *Pſalmiſt* obſerved) ſuch Perſons do not appear deſtitute or forſaken; how alſo Iniquity is commonly ſtop'd in his full cariere, and then eaſily receives a check, when its violence ſeem'd uncontrollable; how likewiſe many times the World is reſcued from Confuſions and Diſtractions unextricable by any viſible wit or force; with other like occurrences in humane Affairs, muſt admit it for a reaſonable *hypotheſis* (fit to render a cauſe of ſuch appearances) that a tranſcendent Goodneſs doth ſecretly interpoſe, furthering the production of ſuch effects; he muſt upon ſuch obſervation be ready to verifie that of the *Pſalmiſt: Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth the Earth.* St. *Paul* inſtructs us, that in paſt-times (that is, in all Generations from the beginning of things) *God did atteſt himſelf* to be the Governour of the World: how? ἀγαθοποιῶν, by his beneficence; *giving to Men ſhowers from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling their Hearts with food and gladneſs:* competent evidences it ſeems theſe were of his Providence, and withall (ſuppoſing that) certain demonſtrations of his Goodneſs: Although ſome have abuſed this kind of Teſtimony, or argumentation ſo valid in it ſelf, unto a contrary purpoſe alledging, that if God ruled the World, ſo much Wickedneſs and Impiety would not be tolerated therein, that ingrateful and evil Men could not ſo thrive and flouriſh; that more ſpeedy and more ſevere Vengeance would be executed; that Benefits would not be ſcattered among the crowd of Men, with ſo promiſcuous and undiſtinguiſhing a freeneſs: But ſuch Diſcourſes, upon a juſt and true account, do only infer the great Patience and Clemency, the unconfined Mercy and Bounty of our Lord; that he is in Diſpoſition very different from pettiſh and impatient Man, who ſhould he have the Reins put into his hands, and in his adminiſtration of things ſhould be ſo often neglected, croſſed, abuſed, would ſoon overturn all things; and being himſelf diſcompoſed with Paſſion, would precipitate the World into confuſion and ruine. Things would not have ſubſiſted hitherto, and continued in their orderly courſe, but by the moderation of an immenſe Goodneſs; by that

Pſal. 14. 6. *tot.* 10. 14. 72. 12. Iſa. 25. 4. Pſal. 37. 25. Pſal. 58. *ult.* Acts 14. 17.

—— *magni cuſtos clementia mundi.* Claud.

'Tis *by the Lord's Mercies that we* (we the whole body of ſinful Men, ſo guilty of heinous Provocations, and Rebellions againſt our Maker) *are not conſumed.* And what again God in the *Prophet* ſpeaks concerning *Iſrael*, he might have applied to the whole Nation of Men: *How ſhall I* Lam. 3. 32. Acts 17. 26.

give

give thee up, Ephraim; how ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? how ſhall I make thee as Admah? how ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? I will not execute the fierceneſs of my Anger, I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not Man: the reaſon (for I am God, and not Man) is obſervable; implying (upon parity of Reaſon in the Caſes, concerning that one Nation, and concerning the Body of Men) that it is an Indulgenee, and forbearance above, if not contrary to the Temper of Man, and even beyond humane Conceit, whereby the ſtate of things here doth ſubſiſt, and is preſerved from Ruine.

Thus Nature, and thus Providence do bear witneſs concerning the diſpoſition of God. As for holy *Scripture*, there is nothing either in way of poſitive aſſertion more frequently inculcated, or by more illuſtrious Exam-
Exod. 34. 6. ples ſet forth and made palpable, than this Attribute of God. When God would impart a Portraicture, or deſcription of himſelf to his deareſt Friend, and Favourite *Moſes*; the firſt and chief Lineaments thereof are ſeveral ſorts, or ſeveral Inſtances of Goodneſs; he expreſſes himſelf *Merciful and*
אל רחום *gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs: (Merciful: El rachum;)* a *God of pitying*, or ſtrong in pity; that is, moſt apt to commiſerate and to ſuccour thoſe who are in Need or Diſtreſs. *Gracious*, that is, ready both freely to forgive Wrongs, and to diſpence Favours. *Long-ſuffering*, or *longus irarum*, that is, not ſoon moved, or apt eaſily to conceive diſpleaſure; not haſty in execution of Vengeance, or venting his Anger in hurtful effects. *Abundant in goodneſs*, that is, not ſparing as to quantity or quality, either in the multitude or magnitude of his Favours, but in all reſpects exceedingly liberal; conferring willingly both very many, and ve-
Pſal. 86. 5. 103. 8, &c. ry great Benefits. Such did God repreſent himſelf to *Moſes*, when he deſired a fuller Knowledge, and nearer acquaintance with him, than ordinary means afford. The ſame character in ſubſtance we have often repeated; and ſometimes with advantage of emphatical Expreſſion, well deſerving
Joel 2. 13. our obſervation and regard; as when the Prophet *Joel* ſaith, that God *is*
Mich. 7. 18. *penitent, or ſorry for evil inflicted*; and *Micah*, that *he delighteth in Mercy*;
Neh. 9. 17. and when *Nehemiah* calleth him *a God of Pardons*; and when *Eſay*
Iſa. 30. 18. repreſents him as *waiting* (or ſeeking occaſions) *to be gracious:* and all this in the *Old Teſtament*, where God ſeems to look upon Man with a leſs ſerene, and debonair Aſpect: Indeed as that diſpenſation (ſutably to the nature and condition of things under it) doth ſet out God's Mercy and Goodneſs with eſpecial relation to this preſent World, or temporal Eſtate; ſo the *New* one more abundantly diſplays his more excellent care and love of our Souls; his great tenderneſs of our ſpiritual and eternal welfare. It is all of
Rom 2. 4. it in its nature and deſign but as it were one entire declaration of the τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ (the beneficial diſpoſition, the benignity, or bountifulneſs of God, as St. *Paul* telleth us) 'tis a rare project of divine *philanthropy*; an illuſtrious *affidavit* of God's wonderful propenſity to bleſs and ſave Mankind; manifeſted by the higheſt expreſſions and inſtances of Love and Goodneſs that were poſſible. (For his not ſparing his own Son, *the expreſs Image of his ſubſtance*, the deareſt object of his infinite Love, the partaker of his eternal Nature and Glory, but delivering him up a Sacrifice for our Offences; his moſt earneſt woing our baſeneſs and unworthineſs to reconciliation with him, and admiſſion or acceptance of his favour; his tendering upon ſo fair and eaſie terms an endleſs Life in perfect joy and bliſs; his furniſhing us with ſo plentiful Means and powerful Aids for attaining that
Rom 5. 33. happy State; how pregnant demonſtrations are theſe, of unſpeakable good-
13. 5. neſs toward us, whence) The ordinary titles in this diſpenſation attribu-
2 Cor. 13. 11. 1. 3 ted unto him are, *the God of love and peace, of hope, of patience; of all grace,*

of

of all Conſolation; the Father of Pities, rich in Mercy, full of Bowels; Love and Goodneſs it ſelf. Thus doth the *Scripture* poſitively aſſert God's Goodneſs; thus it directly repreſents and deſcribes his gracious Diſpoſition toward us. And as for Examples (which muſt ſerve as to illuſtrate and explain, ſo alſo to verifie, and aſſure Matters of this Nature) if we carefully attend to God's ordinary Proceedings with Men there recorded, we ſhall find this Diſpoſition very conſpicuous in them. Who can recount the number, or ſet out the value of thoſe Inſtances, wherein God's Goodneſs is expreſſed toward ſuch as lov'd him? of his admirable Condeſcenſion in drawing them to him; of the Affectionate Tenderneſs, with which he conſtantly embraced them; of his merciful Indulgence toward them, when provoked by their untowardly Behaviour; of his kind Acceptance, and munificent recompencing their Endeavours to pleaſe him; of his deep compaſſionating their Sufferings; of his vigilant Carefulneſs over them, and over all their Concernments? Methinks the higheſt Expreſſions that Language, aſſiſted with all its Helps of Metaphor and Reſemblance can afford, are very languid and faint in compariſon of what they ſtrain to repreſent, when the Goodneſs of God toward them who love him, comes to be expreſſed: *As the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his Mercy toward them that fear him. Like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; So *David* ſtrives to utter it, but with Similitudes far ſhort of the Truth. If any will come near to reach it, 'tis that in *Moſes* and *Zachary*, when they are compared to *the Apple of God's Eye*, that is, to the moſt dear and tender part, as it were, about him.

Eph. 2. 4. Jam. 5. 11. 1 John 4. 8.

Luke 6. 35. *For he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil.*

Pſal. 36. 6. Pſal. 103. 11, 13.

Deut. 32. 10 Zach. 2. 8. John 15. 14. 2 Chron. 20. 7.

We find them often ſtyled, and ever treated as Friends, and as Children; and that in a Senſe tranſcending the vulgar ſignification of thoſe Words; for, what Friendſhip could endure, could paſs over, could forget, could admit an entire Reconciliation, and Re-eſtabliſhment in Affection after ſuch heinous Indignities, ſuch Infidelities, ſuch Undutifulneſs as were thoſe of *Adam*, of *Noah*, of *David*, of *Peter*: who would have received into Favour and Familiarity a *Manaſſes*, a *Magdalen*, a *Paul*? who would ſo far extend his regard upon the Poſterity (upon ſuch a Poſterity, ſo untoward, ſo unworthy) of his Friend, as God did upon that of *Abraham*, in reſpect unto him? what great Prince would employ his principal Courtiers to guard and ſerve a poor Attendant, a mean Subject of his? Yet; *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*; And many Inſtances we have of thoſe glorious Inhabitants of Heaven by God's Appointment ſtooping down to wait upon, and to perform Service to the Sons of Men. But upon Examples of this Nature, being numberleſs, and compoſing indeed the main Body of the *Sacred Hiſtory* (it being chiefly deſigned to repreſent them) I ſhall not inſiſt; I ſhall only obſerve for preventing or ſatisfying Objections (yea indeed for turning them to the advantage and confirmation of that which we aſſert) that even in thoſe Caſes, wherein God's higheſt Severity hath been exerciſed, when God hath purpoſed to exhibit moſt dreadful Inſtances of his Juſtice upon the moſt provocative Occaſions; we may diſcern his Goodneſs eminently ſhewing it ſelf: That even in the greateſt Extremity of his Diſpleaſure, in his Acts of higheſt Vengeance, *Mercy* doth κατακαυχᾶται κρίσεως (as St. *James* ſpeaketh) *boaſt it ſelf, and triumph over Juſtice*: that God, as the Sun (to uſe

Pſal. 34. 7.

Τίνες φιλανθρωπία ἢ πιμωρία· ἔπω δὲ ἐγὼ πείθομαι κολάζειν ἢ θεόν. Naz. *Orat.* 38.

Ἐγὼ τοσαύτην ποιησάμην εἰς φημὶ τὴν θεῦ κηδεμονίας, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀφ' ὧν ἐτίμησεν, ἀλλὰ κ ἀφ' ὧν ἐκόλασεν ὁμοίως ἡμᾶς ἀνάδῃ τ ἀγαθότητα αὐτῦ δεικνύναι, κ τ φιλανθρωπίαν. Chryſ. ἀνδρ. ζ'.

Ὁ θεὸς ἁπαθὴς ὢν κἂν εὐεργαῖῃ, κἂν κολάζῃ, ὁμοίως ὢν ἀγαθός. Ibid.

Jam. 2. 13.

Tertullian's Similitude) when he ſeems moſt to infeſt and ſcorch us, doth even then diſpenſe uſeful and healthful Influences upon us. Even I ſay in the moſt terrible and amazing Examples of Divine Juſtice (ſuch as were the ejecting and excluding Mankind from Paradiſe; the general Deſtruction in the Deluge; the exſcinding and extirpation of the *Amorites* together with other Inhabitants of *Canaan*; the delivering *Iſrael* and *Judah* into the *Aſſyrian* Thraldom, the final deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, together with the diſperſion of the *Jewiſh* Nation over the World, and its ſad Conſequences) we may (not hardly) obſerve Particulars, more than ſavouring of great Mercy and Goodneſs.

Tunc maximè eſt optimus, cùm tibi non bonus; ſicut Sol tibi etiam quando non putas, optimus & utilis, &c. Tertull. *in* Marc. II. 2.

Vide Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 8. *p.* 63. *optimè.*

1. That (in moſt of theſe Caſes, in all according to ſome Account) God was not moved to the Diſpleaſure productive of thoſe Effects but upon very great Conſiderations. That he did not ſeek Advantages, nor embrace all Occaſions; but was incenſed by ſuperlative Degrees of Iniquity and Impurity (ſuch in their own Nature, and much aggravated by their Circumſtances) ſuch as rendred common Life inconvenient and inſupportable to Men; made the Earth to ſtink with their Filth and Corruption; to groan under the burthen and weight of them; to pant and labour for a riddance from them.

2. That God did not upon the firſt Glimpſes of Provocation proceed to the execution and diſcharge of his Wrath, but did with wonderful Patience expect a change in the Offenders, *waiting to be gracious*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh; affording more than competent time, and means more than ſufficient of appeaſing him by Repentance; vouchſafing frequent Admonitions, Solicitations, Threatnings, moderate Corrections, and other ſuch proper Methods conducing to their Amendment, and to their Preſervation.

Eſa. 30. 18.

3. That their Inflictions themſelves, how grievous ſoever in appearance, were not really extreme in meaſure; not accompanied with ſo acute Torments, nor with ſo lingring Pains, nor with ſo utter a Ruin as might have been inflicted; but that (as *Ezra*, in reſpect to one of thoſe Caſes, confeſſeth) they *were leſs than their Iniquities deſerved.* That (as it is in the *Pſalm*) *He did not ſtir up all his Wrath*; which would have immediately conſumed them, or infinitely tormented them.

Ez. 9. 13.

Pſal. 78. 38.

4. That (conſequently upon ſome of thoſe Premiſſes) the Afflictions brought upon them were in a ſort rather neceſſary than voluntary in reſpect of him; rather a natural Fruit of their Diſpoſitions and Dealings than a free Reſult of his Will; however contrary to his primary Intentions and Deſires. Whence he no leſs truly, than earneſtly diſclaims having any Pleaſure in their Death, that he *afflicted willingly, or grieved the Children of Men*; and charged their Diſaſters upon themſelves, as the ſole Cauſes of them.

Ezek. 18. 23, 32. 33. 11. Lam. 3 33. Hoſ. 13. 9.

5. That farther, the Chaſtiſements inflicted were wholſome and profitable, both in their own Nature, and according to his Deſign; both in reſpect to the generality of Men (who by them were warned, and by ſuch Examples deterr'd from incurring the like Miſchiefs; were kept from the Inconveniences, ſecured from the Temptations, the Violences, the Allurements, the Contagions of the preſent evil State? according to that Reaſon alledged for Puniſhments of this kind: *All the people ſhall hear, and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly*) and in regard to the Sufferers themſelves, who thereby were prevented from proceeding farther in their wicked Courſes; accumulating

Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ζ'. Ὁμοῦ καὶ δικαστὴς καὶ ἰατρὸς καὶ διδάσκαλός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός. *Ibid.*

Deut. 17. 13.

Ἐπιδυσωπεῖ τιμωρίαν, ἀ δεῖ ἀπολαύοντων ἀ παιδεῖ δίκην, ἀλλὰ τὰ μέλλοντα διορθούμενος. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 99.

lating (or, *treaſuring up*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh) farther degrees of *Wrath*, as obdurate and incorrigible People will ſurely do. (*Why*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *ſhould ye be ſtricken any more?* (to what purpoſe is moderate Correction?) *ye will revolt more and more.* That he did with a kind of Violence to his own Inclinations, and Reluctancy inflict Puniſhments on them. *O Ephraim, how ſhall I give thee up, O Ephraim.* Yea farther, Rom. 2. 5. Iſa. 1. 5. 26. 10. Hoſ. 6. 4.

6. That during their Sufferances God did bear Compaſſion toward them, who underwent it. *His Bowels*, as we are told, *ſounded and were troubled*; his *Heart was turned within him*; his *Repentings were kindled together*; *in all their Afflictions himſelf was afflicted*; *he remember'd and conſider'd they were but Duſt*; that they *were but Fleſh* (that they were but of a weak and frail Temper; that they were naturally prone to Corruption and Evil) and did therefore pity their Infirmity, and their Miſery. Iſa. 63. 9, 15. Hoſ. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. Pſal. 103. 14. 78. 39.

7. That God *in his Wrath remembred Mercy* (as the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks) mixing gracious Intentions of future Refreſhment and Reparation with the preſent Executions of Juſtice. *I know* (ſaith he in the Prophet *Jeremy*) *the Thoughts that I think toward you*; *Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected End. Behold, I will bring Health and Cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them abundance of Peace and Truth.* And, *For a ſmall Moment* (ſaith he again in *Eſay*) *have I forſaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee.* And, *Ye ſhall be comforted concerning the Evil that I have brought upon Jeruſalem.* ——and *ye ſhall know, that I have not done without cauſe all that I have done in it*; ſaith the Lord (he ſaith ſo in *Ezekiel*) *without cauſe*, that is, without a beneficial Deſign toward them. Hab. 3. 2. Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. Jer. 29. 11. 33. 6. Iſa. 54. 7. Ezek. 14. 21.

8. Laſtly, that he always ſignified a readineſs to turn from his Anger, and to forgive them; and upon very equal and eaſie Terms to be fully reconciled to them; according to that in the *Pſalmiſt*, *He doth not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever*; but upon any reaſonable Overtures of Humiliation, Confeſſion and Converſion to him, was ready to abate, yea, to remove the Effects of his Diſpleaſure; *Thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt vengeance of their Inventions.* Pſal. 103. 9. Pſal. 99. 8.

Theſe Particulars, if we attentively ſurvey thoſe dreadful Examples of Divine Severity forementioned (the greateſt which Hiſtory acquaints us with, or which have been ſhewed on this Theater of Humane Affairs) we may obſerve moſt of them in all, all of them in ſome, either plainly expreſſed, or ſufficiently inſinuated by the Circumſtances obſervable in the Hiſtorical Narrations concerning them; ſo that even the harſheſt Inſtances of God's wrathful dealing with ſome Men, may well ſerve to the illuſtration of his Mercy and Goodneſs toward all Men; may evince it true, what our Lord affirms, that God is, χρηστὸς ὅτι ἀχαρίστους, καὶ πονηροὺς, *kind and beneficent even to the moſt ingrateful and unworthy Perſons.* To make which Obſervation good, and conſequently to aſſert the verity of our Text (That *God is good unto all, and merciful over all his Works*)) againſt the moſt plauſible Exceptions; I ſhall examine the Particulars in the following Diſcourſe. Luke 6. 35.

SERMON XXXVII.

Of the Goodneſs of GOD.

PSALM CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to All, and his tender Mercies are over all his Work.

I Shall now more particularly conſider the ſeveral Inſtances beforementioned.

I. The Puniſhment inflicted on Mankind for the firſt Tranſgreſſion containeth in it much of Depth and Myſtery, ſurpaſſing perhaps all Capacity of Man to reach; its full Comprehenſion being by Divine Wiſdom (I conceive) purpoſely concealed from us; ſo that I cannot pretend thoroughly to explain it; and ſhall not therefore ſpeak much about it.

This indeed is clear, that God did in his Proceedings occaſion'd thereby intend remarkably to evidence his grievous Reſentment and Indignation againſt wilful Diſobedience; yet in the management thereof we may obſerve; that,

Vid. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ζ'. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπε, καθάπερ εἰώθεις ἦν ὑβεισμένον αὐτῶν, ἢ μᾶλλον ἢ παμμίαξε, &c. Ibid.

1. After that Provocation (in it ſelf ſo high, and liable to ſo great Aggravations) God did expreſs his Reſentment in ſo calm and gentle a manner that *Adam*, though abaſhed upon the Conſcience of his Fault, was not yet by the vehemency of the Reproof utterly diſmayed or dejected.

2. God uſed great Moderation in the infliction of this Puniſhment; mitigating the extremity of the Sentence juſtly decreed and plainly declared to *Adam* (that in caſe of his offending againſt the Law preſcribed him, he ſhould immediately die) for notwithſtanding his Forfeiture that very day of Life, God reprieved him, and allowed him a long Life, almoſt of a Thouſand Years after. Gen. 2. 17.

3. God did not quite reject Man thereupon, nor did withdraw his fatherly Care and Providence from him, but openly continued them; inſomuch that immediately after the Curſe pronounced upon our firſt Parents, the next Paſſage we meet with is, that unto *Adam* and his *Wife* did the Lord God make Coats, and cloathed them. Gen. 3. 21.

4. Although indeed Man was by his Fault a great Loſer, and became deprived of high Advantages; yet the Mercy of God did leave him in no very deplorable Eſtate, ſimply conſidered, as to his Life here; the Relicks of his

his firſt Eſtate, and the Benefits continued to him being very conſiderable; ſo that we the Inheritors of that great Diſaſter do commonly find the Enjoyment of Life, with the Conveniences attending it, to be ſweet and deſirable.

5. The Event manifeſts, that while God in appearance ſo ſeverely puniſhed Mankind, he did in his Mind reſerve Thoughts of higheſt Kindneſs toward us; even then deſigning not only to reſtore us to our former Degree, but to raiſe us to a Capacity of obtaining a far more high Pitch of Happineſs. While he excluded us from a Terreſtrial Paradiſe here, he provided a far better Celeſtial one, into which, if we pleaſe, by Obedience to his Holy Laws we may certainly enter. So that in this of all moſt heavy inſtance of Vengeance God's exceeding Goodneſs and Clemency do, upon ſeveral Conſiderations moſt clearly ſhine.

II. The Calamity, which by the general Deluge did overflow the World, was not (we may conſider) brought upon Men but in regard to the moſt enormous Offences long continued in, and after amendment was become deſperate. Not till after much forbearance, and till Men were grown to a ſuperlative pitch of wickedneſs by no fit means (by no friendly warning, no ſharp reprehenſion, no moderate chaſtiſement) corrigible. Not until the Earth was become (eſpecially for Perſons of any Innocence or Integrity) no tolerable Habitation, but a Theater of lamentable Tragedies, a Seat of horrid Iniquity, a Sink of loathſome Impurity. So that in Reaſon it was to be eſteemed rather a Favour to Mankind to reſcue it from ſo unhappy a State, than to ſuffer it to perſiſt therein. To ſnatch Men away out of ſo uncomfortable a Place, from ſo wretched a Condition, was a Mercy; it had been a Judgment to have left them annoying, rifling and harraſing; biting, tearing and devouring; yea defiling and debauching each other; and ſo heaping upon themſelves Loads of Guilt, and deeper Obligations to Vengeance. *The Earth* (ſaith the Text) *was corrupt before God; and the Earth was fill'd with Violence. God looked upon the Earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all Fleſh had corrupted its way upon the Earth*; which univerſal and extreme Corruption had not in probability ſprung up in a ſmall time (for, Gen. 6. 11.

Nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus,

is true not only of ſingle Men, but of Communities; no People, no Age doth ſuddenly degenerate into extreme Degrees of Wickedneſs) ſo that the Divine Patience had long endured and attended upon Men, before the Reſolution of thus puniſhing them was taken up; the which alſo was not at firſt peremptory and irreverſible, but in God's Deſign and Deſire it was revocable; for the World had a long Reprieve after the Sentence paſs'd; Execution was deferr'd till *Noah*'s long preaching of Righteouſneſs, and denouncing of Judgment in a manner ſo notorious and ſignal (not by verbal Declarations only, but by the viſible Structure of the Ark) could prevail nothing toward their amendment, but was either diſtruſted or diſregarded, and perhaps derided by them. For, as St. *Peter* tells us, *They were diſobedient, when once the Long-ſuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing*; that is (as is collected by ſeveral Interpreteas from the * Text of the Story) during no leſs than 120 Years; a competent time for their recollecting themſelves, and endeavouring by amendment of Life to prevent the Ruin threatned to come upon them. Yet notwithſtanding that, this obſtinate and incorrigible Diſobedience did ſo much diſpleaſe 1 Pet. 3. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 5. * Gen. 6. 3.

God

Gen. 6. 6. God, as that in conſideration thereof God is ſaid to have *repented that he made Man on the Earth*, and to have been thereby grieved at the Heart: Yet did he ſo temper his Anger as not utterly to deſtroy Mankind, but provided againſt its total ruin, by preſerving one Family as a Seminary thereof; preſerving the Father thereof (queſtionleſs by a ſpecial Grace) from the ſpreading Contagion, inſpiring him with Faith, and qualifying him for the Favour, which by him he deſigned to communicate unto the World; the reparation thereof, and reſtoring the Generations of Men. So that alſo through this Paſſage of Providence, how diſmal and dreadful ſoever at firſt ſight, much Goodneſs will be tranſparent to him that looks upon attentively.

III. In the next place, as to that extermination and exciſion of the *Canaanites*, which carries ſo horrible an appearance of Severity, we may find Levit. 18. it qualifiable, if we conſider, that for the nature of the Treſpaſſes, which procured it, they were inſufferably heinous and abominable: Moſt ſottiſh, barbarous, and baſe Superſtitions (Cruelty and Impurity being eſſential Ingredients into their Performances of Religion, and it being Piety with them to be exceedingly wicked) and in their other Practice moſt beaſtly laſciviouſneſſes, moſt bloody Violences, Oppreſſions and Rapines generally abounding. So that for thoſe Men themſelves, who were by turns, as it hapned, the Authors and the Objects of theſe Dealings, it could not be deſirable to continue in a State of living ſo wretched and uncomfortable. Impunity had been no Mercy to ſuch People, but rather a Cruelty; cutting them off muſt needs be the greateſt Favour they were capable of; it being only removing them from a Hell here, and preventing their deſerving many worſe Hells hereafter. Even to themſelves it was a Favour and a greater one to their Poſterity, whom they might have brought forth to ſucceed in their Courſes, and to the Conſequences of them; whom they would have engaged into their wicked Cuſtoms, and their woful Miſchiefs. They were not ſo deſtroyed from the Land, until it grew uninhabitable in any tolerable manner, and it ſelf could not, as it were, endure them any longer, but (as the Text doth moſt ſignificantly expreſs Levit. 18. 28. it) *did ſpue them out*; being like a Stomach ſurcharg'd with foul, or poiſonous Matter, which it loaths, and is pained with, and therefore naturally labours to expel. Neither was this ſad Doom executed upon them till after 400 Years of forbearance: for even in *Abraham*'s time God took notice of their Iniquity, then born and growing; and gave account of his Gen. 15. 16. ſuſpending their Puniſhment; *becauſe* (ſaid he) *the Iniquity of the Amorites* was not yet full (that is, was not yet arrived to a pitch of deſperate Obſtinacy and Incorrigibility:) While there was the leaſt glimpſe of Hope, the leaſt Relicks of any Reaſon, any Regret, any Shame in them, the leaſt poſſibility of Recovery, God ſtopped his avenging Hand; but when all ground of Hope was removed; the whole Stock of natural Light and Strength was imbezill'd; all Fear, all Remorſe, all Modeſty were quite baniſhed away; all Means of Cure had proved ineffectual; the Gangreen of Vice had ſeized on every part, Iniquity was grown mature and mellow; then was the Stroke of Juſtice indeed not more ſeaſonable than neceſſary; then was the fatal Sword the only proper Remedy; then ſo with one Stroke to cut off them, and their Sins and their Miſchiefs, and their Miſeries together, was an Argument no leſs ſtrong and clear of God's merciful Goodneſs, than of his juſt Anger toward them.

IV. The

IV. The like Account we may render of God's Judgments upon the People of *Iſrael*. If we conſult the *Prophets*, who declare the ſtate of things, the Facts, the Diſpoſitions, the Guilts, that brought them down from Heaven, we ſhall ſee, that they came upon account of an univerſal Apoſtaſie from both the Faith and Practice of true Religion; *a deep corruption (like that in the days of Gibeah*, as the Prophet *Hoſea* ſpeaketh) in Mind and Manners; an utter perverting of all Truth and Right; an obſtinate compliance with, or emulation of the moſt abominable Practices of the Heathen Nations about them; an Univerſal Apoſtaſie, I ſay, from God and all Goodneſs; a thorough Prevalence of all Iniquity. Hear the *Prophets* expreſſing it, and deſcribing them. *Jeremy*; *Run ye to and fro through the Streets of Hieruſalem; ſee now, and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof; if ye can find a Man; if there be any that executeth Judgment, that ſeeketh the Truth, and I will pardon it. Eſay*; *The Earth is defiled under the Inhabitants thereof; becauſe they have tranſgreſſed the Laws, changed the Ordinances, broken the everlaſting Covenant: Ah ſinful Nation, a people laden with Iniquities, a Seed of Evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters; they have forſaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Iſrael unto Anger; they are gone away backward*, &c. Thus do theſe and other Prophets in a like ſtrain deſcribe in the groſs the ſtate of things preceding thoſe Judgments. And in *Ezekiel* (in divers places, particularly in the 8*th*, but eſpecially in the 22*d*. Chapter) we have their Offences in retail, and by parts (their groſs Impieties, their grievous Cruelties, Extortions and Oppreſſions) ſet out copiouſly, and in moſt lively Colours. And as the Quality of their Provocations was ſo bad, and the Extenſion of them ſo large, ſo was their Condition deſperate; there were no means of Remedy left, no hopes of Amendment; ſo was their Forehead covered with Impudence, their Heart hardned with Obſtinacy, their Minds deeply tinctured with habitual Pravity and Perverſeneſs: *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots, then may ye alſo do good that are accuſtomed to do evil*, ſaith *Jeremy* concerning them. All Methods of reclaiming them had proved fruitleſs; no favourable Dealings, no gentle Admonition, or kind Inſtruction would avail any thing; for 'tis of them the Prophet *Eſay* ſaith; *Let Favour be ſhewed to the Wicked, yet will he not learn Righteouſneſs.* No Advices, no Reproofs (how frequent, how vehement, how urgent ſoever) had any Effect upon them. Almighty God declares often that he had ſpoken unto them riſing up early, but they would not hear nor regard his Speech; did not only neglect, and refuſe, but *deſpiſe, loath, mock*, and *reproach* it (*turning their Back upon him, pulling away their Shoulder, ſtiffning their Neck, and ſtopping their Ears, that they ſhould not hear*) *that he had ſpread out his Hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainſaying People; to a People that* (with extreme Inſolence and Immodeſty) *provoked him to Anger continually to his Face.* Nor could any Tenders of Mercy allure or move them: *I ſaid* (God ſaid it in *Jeremy*) *after all theſe things, turn unto me, but ſhe returned not. Amend your Ways and your Doings, and obey the Voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the Evil, that he hath pronounced againſt you. Repent, and turn your ſelves from all your Tranſgreſſions, ſo Iniquity ſhall not be your Ruin*; and innumerable the like Overtures we have of Grace and Mercy to them; all which they proudly and perverſely rejected, perſiſting in their wicked Courſes: they even repelled and ſilenced, they rudely treated and perſecuted the Prophets ſent unto them with Meſſages of kind Warning, and Overtures of Grace; ſo obſtructing all acceſs of Mercy to themſelves: *They ſay to the Seers, ſee not; and to the Prophets, propheſie not unto us right things*: ſo *Eſay* reports their proceeding;

Hoſ. 9. 9.
Je. 5. 1.
Eſ. 24. 5. 1. 4.
Ezek. 22.
Jer. 13. 23.
Iſa. 26. 10.
Jer. 25. 4. 32. 33. 6. 10. Zech. 7. 11. Neh. 9. 29, 30. Eſ. 65. 2. 2 Chr. 36. 16.
Jer. 3. 7. 7. 3. 4. 1, 14. 18. 11. 26. 13.
Jer. 11. 21. 32. 30. Eſa. 30. 10. Matt. 23. 37. Ezek. 18. Eſa. 30. 10.

Acts 7. 51. ceeding; *which of the Prophets did not your Fathers perſecute:* ſo St. *Stephen* expoſtulates with them. Neither were gentler Chaſtiſements deſigned for their Correction and Cure any-wiſe available; they made no Impreſſion on
Iſa. 1. 16, 17, &c. (Neh. 9. 29.) Jer. 2. 30. 5. 3. them, they produced no change in them: *In vain* (ſaith God) *I have ſmitten your Children, they have received no Correction.* And, *Thou haſt ſmitten them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive Correction; they have made their Faces harder than a Rock,*
Iſa. 9. 13. *they have refuſed to return*; and, *The People turneth not to him that ſmiteth*
Rom. 9. 22. *them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of Hoſts.* Unto this καταρτισμὸς εἰς ἀπώλειαν, this perfect Fitneſs (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) this maturity of deſperate and irrecoverable Impiety, had that People grown, not at once, and on a ſudden, but by continual ſteps of Provocation, through a long courſe of time, during that divine Patience ſparing them, and by various Expedients ſtriving to recover them. This Conſideration is frequently inſiſted
Jer. 32. 30. 7. 25. 16. 12. 11. 7. upon, eſpecially in the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The Children of Iſrael, and the Children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth; ſince the day*
Ezr. 9. 7. *that your Fathers came forth out of the Land of Egypt unto this day, I have even ſent unto you all my Servants the Prophets, daily riſing up early, and ſending them; Yet they hearkned not unto me*, &c. Well then, after ſo many hundred Years of abuſed Patience, and unſucceſsful Labour to reclaim them, it was needful that Juſtice ſhould have her Courſe upon them: Yet how then did God inflict it, with what Mildneſs and Moderation, with what
Neh. 9. 31. Pity and Relenting? *Nevertheleſs* (ſay they in *Nehemiah*) *for thy great Mercies ſake thou didſt not utterly conſume them, nor forſake them, for thou art a gracious and merciful God.* And, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniqui-*
Ezr 9. 13. *ties deſerve*, doth *Ezra* confeſs. *I will not execute the fierceneſs of my An-*
Hoſ. 11. 19. *ger*; doth God himſelf reſolve and declare in *Hoſea.* So mild he was as to the meaſure of his puniſhing; and what Compaſſion accompanied it,
Jer. 31. 20. thoſe pathetical Expreſſions declare: *My Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together. Is Ephraim my dear Son, is he a pleaſant Child? for ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, therefore my*
Iſa. 63. 9. *Bowels are troubled for him. In all their Afflictions he was afflicted*, &c. We may add; that notwithſtanding all theſe Provocations of his Wrath, and Abuſings of his Patience, which thus neceſſitated God to execute his Vengeance, yet even during the execution thereof, and while his Hand was ſo ſtretched forth againſt them, he did retain Thoughts of Favour and Intentions of doing good even toward this ſo ingrateful, ſo inſenſible, ſo incorrigible a People: *For a ſmall time* (ſaith God) *have I forſaken thee,*
Iſa. 54. 7. Jer. 29. 11. 33. 6, 7. *but with great Mercies will I gather thee: I know the Thoughts that I think toward you, ſaith the Lord, Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected End.* Now theſe things being ſeriouſly laid together, have we not occaſion and ground ſufficient even in this Inſtance no leſs to admire and adore the wonderful Benignity, Mercy, and Patience of God, than to dread and tremble at his Juſtice?

V. As for the laſt ſo calamitous and piteous Deſtruction of *Hieruſalem*, with the grievous Conſequences thereof, as we might apply thereto the former Conſiderations, ſo we ſhall only obſerve what was peculiar in that Caſe; that God diſpenſed ſuch Means to prevent it; (to remove the meritorious Cauſes thereof, obſtinate Impenitency and Incredulity; reſiſting the Truth by him ſent from Heaven with ſo clear a Revelation and powerful Confirmation; deſpiſing the Spirit of God, and the Dictates of their own Conſcience; baſely miſuſing divers ways, and at laſt cruelly murthering the Son of God) ſuch Means, I ſay, God did employ for the removing thoſe Provocatives of Vengeance, which (as our Lord himſelf

ſaith)

ſaith) were ſufficient to have converted *Tyre* and *Sidon*; yea, to have preſerved *Sodom* it ſelf; ſo that our *Saviour* could with a compaſſionate grief deplore the unſucceſsfulneſs of his tender affection, and ſolicitous care for their welfare, in theſe paſſionate terms; *How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not?* That St. *John* the *Baptiſt* his ſharp reproofs, his powerful exhortations, his downright and clear forewarnings of what would follow (*Even now, ſaid he, the axe is laid to the root of the tree*) attended with ſo remarkable circumſtances of his perſon, and his carriage (which induced all the World about him to regard him as no ordinary man, but a ſpecial inſtrument of God, and meſſenger from Heaven) did yet find no effect conſiderable; the *Phariſees* and *Lawyers*, thoſe corrupt guides, whoſe authority managed the blind multitude, *defeating the counſel of God toward themſelves*, as St. *Luke* ſpeaketh; (that is, defeating his gracious purpoſe of reclaiming them from diſobedience, and conſequently of with-holding the judgments imminent) they reviled the perſon of that venerable *Prophet*, *He hath a devil*, ſaid they; they ſlighted his premonitions, and rejected his advices, by obſerving which, thoſe dreadful miſchiefs, which fell upon their rebellious heads, might have been averted. We may add, that even thoſe fearful judgments were tempered with mixtures of favourable deſign, not only to the community of mankind (which by ſo remarkable a vengeance upon the perſecutors of our *Lord* and the ſcorners of his doctrine was converted unto, or confirmed in the Chriſtian Faith) but even toward that people whom it ſerved to convince of their errors and crimes; to induce them to repentance, to provoke them unto the acknowledgment and embracing of God's truth, ſo palpably vindicated by him. So that I might here apply that paſſage of St. *Paul* (if not directly and adequately according to his ſenſe, yet with no incongruous alluſion at leaſt) *Have they ſtumbled, that they ſhould fall* (or, was there no other deſign of God's judgments upon them, but their utter ruine?) μὴ γένοιτο· *No ſuch matter; but through their fall ſalvation came to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealouſie* (or emulation.) And, in effect, as our *Lord* in the midſt of his ſufferings did affectionately pray for God's mercy upon them, as the *Apoſtles* did offer reconciliation unto them all indifferently, who would repent, and were willing to embrace it; ſo were ſuch of them as were diſpoſed to comply with thoſe invitations, received to grace, how deeply ſoever involved in the continued guilt of thoſe enormous perſecutions, injuries and blaſphemies; as particularly Saint *Paul*, that illuſtrious example of God's patience, and mercy in this caſe. So that neither by this inſtance is any attribute of God more ſignalized, than his tranſcendent goodneſs, in like manner as by the former inſtances, and in analogy to them by all others, that may be aſſigned. By all of them it will appear that God is primarily and of himſelf diſpoſed to do all fitting and poſſible good to men, not to inflict evil more than is fit and neceſſary; that God is indeed *Optimus ex naturæ proprietate* (*moſt good according to property of nature*) although *juſtus ex cauſæ neceſſitate* (*ſevere from the neceſſity of the caſe*) as *Tertullian* ſpeaketh. To afflict men (either ſome men ſingly, or whole ſocieties of men) may be ſometimes expedient upon ſeveral accompts; for vindicating the eſteem, and ſupporting the intereſt of goodneſs, which may by impunity be diſgraced, endamaged, endangered; for the diſcrimination of good and evil men, in an obſervable manner; for the encouragement and comfort of the good; the reduction and amendment of the bad; for preventing the contagion, and ſtopping the progreſs of iniquity, whereupon greater guilts, and worſe miſchiefs would enſue; it may be

Matt. 11. 21. 23. 37. 3. 10. Luke 7. 30. Matt. 11. 18. Rom. 11. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 16. *De reſurr. Carnis, c.* 14.

Baſil. *Orat. Quòd Deus non eſt cauſa mali, elegantèr & pulchrè de hac re.*

as neceſſary as ſharp Phyſick to cure publick or private diſtempers; as an inſtrument of rowſing us out of our ſinful lethargies; as that which may cauſe us better to underſtand our ſelves, and more to remember God; as a ground of fearing God, and an inducement to believe his providence. For thoſe and many ſuch purpoſes to bring upon men things diſtaſtful to ſenſe, may be very requiſite; nor doth the doing it any wiſe prejudice the truth of divine goodneſs, but rather confirms it, commends it, and advances its juſt eſteem. It would be a fond indulgence, not a wiſe Kindneſs; a cruel, rather than a loving pity to deal otherwiſe. In fine, we are to conſider, that all the miſchiefs we undergo, God doth not ſo much bring them on us, as we do pull them on our ſelves. They are ἀυθαίρετα πήματα, *affected*, or *ſelf-choſen miſchiefs*; they are κακὰ βλαστήματα προαιρέσεως, *bad ſprouts of our free choice* (as a *Father* calls them) they are (as another *Father* ſaith) ἐκυσίων καρπὸς ἀκόσια ἔκγονα (*the unwilling off-ſprings of wilful evils*) they are the certain reſults of our own will, or the natural fruits of our actions; actions, which (however God deſire, adviſe, command; perſuade, entreat, excite) we do will, we are reſolved to perform. *We in a manner* (as *Salvian* ſaith) *do force God to do whatever he doeth in this kind; violently plucking down vengeance on our own heads; compelling the kind and merciful Lord, againſt his nature and will, to afflict us; not ſo much as giving him leave to ſpare us.* God vehemently diſclaims himſelf to be the original cauſe; to deſign (according to abſolute or primary intention) to deſire to delight in our grief, or our ruine. *As I live, ſaith the Lord,* (and ſurely when God ſwears, we may believe that he is very ſerious) *I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. I call heaven to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet life and death before you, therefore chuſe life. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He would have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would not have any periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance. He made not death, nor hath he pleaſure in the deſtruction of the living.* God then, if we may believe him, is not the firſt authour of our calamities: who then? He tells us himſelf: *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf: thou haſt fallen by thy own iniquity. Your ſins have with-holden good things from you. Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not?* The deſigns, and the endeavours of God do tend to our welfare and ſalvation; 'tis our will and our actions which only procure our ruine: *'Tis we,* that (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *ſeek death in the errour of our life; and pull upon our own ſelves deſtruction.* So that, to conclude this part of our diſcourſe, Even thoſe paſſages of providence, which at firſt glimpſe appear moſt oppoſite, or diſadvantageous to the goodneſs of God (or to our opinion and belief concerning it) do, being well ſifted, no wiſe prejudice it, but rather ſerve to corroborate and magnifie it.

Wiſd. 1. 12. *Carm.* Pythag. Cyril. Hier. Damaſc.

Παύλα κοπᾶ ϗ προγυμάζεται ὁ θεὸς, ὥςε ἡμᾶς ἀπαλλάξαι κολάσεως, ϗ τιμωρείας. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 100.

Nos vim Deo facimus iniquitatibus noſtris; nos nolentem ulciſci cogimus. Deus enim pius & miſericors eſt, & qui neminem velit perire, vel lædere, &c. Salv. *lib.* 5. & 8.

Miſeros nos ſi nec juranti Deo credimus. Hier.

Ezek. 18. 30. 33. 11. Deut. 30. 19. Lam. 3. 32. Wiſd. 1. 13. Hoſ. 13. 9. 14. 1. Jer. 5. 25. Iſa. 64. 6. Matt. 23. 37.

Sap. 1. 5.

St. *Chriſoſtome* in divers places doth inſiſt upon the goodneſs of God in making and threatning Hell it ſelf.

Τῆς Βασιλείας ὐκ ἔλαττον, ἢ ϗ μίσγης ἀπειλὴ δείκνυσιν, ἀυτῆ τῆ ἀγαθότητα, &c. Ἀνδρ. ζ'.

I ſhall only farther briefly touch (or rather but mention) the uſes and effects, to the producing which, the conſideration of God's goodneſs, in ſo manifold ways declared, ſhould be applied.

1. It ſhould beget in us hearty love and reverence toward God, in regard to this attribute ſo excellent and amiable in it ſelf, ſo beneficial and advantageous to us. What can we eſteem, what can we love, if ſo admirable goodneſs doth not affect us? how prodigiouſly cold and hard

is

is that heart, which cannot be warm'd and ſoftned into affection by ſo melting a conſideration?

2. It ſhould produce as grateful ſenſe in our hearts, ſo real endeavours of thankful obedience in our lives. It ſhould make us *walk worthy of God, to all well-pleaſing, bringing forth fruit in every good work*; taking heed of doing, as did *Hezekiah*, of whom it is ſaid; that *he rendred not according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore was wrath upon him*; that we may not have that expoſtulation juſtly applied unto us: *Do ye thus requite the Lord; O fooliſh people and unwiſe?* Col. 1. 20. 2 Chro. 32. 25. Deut. 2. 3.

3. It ſhould engage us the more to fear God; complying with the *Prophet*'s admonition; *Fear the Lord and his goodneſs.* Conſidering that intimation of the *Pſalmiſt*; *There is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayſt be feared*; obſerving that advice of *Samuel, Only fear the Lord, and ſerve him, for conſider what great things he hath done for you.* For that indeed nothing is more terrible, than goodneſs ſlighted, and patience abuſed. Hoſ. 3. 5. Pſal. 130. 4. 1 Sam. 12. 24.

4. It ſhould humble, aſhame and grieve us, for having croſſed and offended ſuch exceeding goodneſs and mercy. It ſhould cauſe us greatly to deteſt our ſins, which lie under ſo heinous an aggravation, to be deeply diſpleaſed with our ſelves, who have ſo unworthily committed them.

5. It ſhould therefore render us wary and vigilant againſt the commiſſion of any ſin; that is, of incurring the guilt of ſo enormous ingratitude and baſeneſs; making us cautious of doing like thoſe, of whom 'tis confeſſed in *Nehemiah*; *They did eat, and were filled and delighted themſelves in thy great goodneſs; nevertheleſs they were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt thee, and caſt thy laws behind their back.* Neh. 9. 25, 26.

6. It ſhould alſo breed and nouriſh in us faith, and hope in God. For what reaſon can we have to diſtruſt of ſo great goodneſs; that he will refuſe to help us in our need; that he will fail in accompliſhment of his promiſe; that he will with-hold what is convenient for us? It ſhould preſerve us from deſpair. What temptation can we have to deſpair of mercy, if we heartily repent of our miſdoings, and ſincerely endeavour to pleaſe him? *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad* Theod. 2. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 63. *optimè & fuſè.*

7. It ſhould upon the ſame account excite us to a free and conſtant exerciſe of all devotions. For why ſhould we be ſhy or fearfull of entring into ſo friendly and favourable a preſence; why ſhould we be backward from having (upon any occaſion or need) a recourſe to him, who is ſo willing, ſo deſirous, ſo ready to do us good? what ſhould hinder us from delighting in oblations of bleſſing, and praiſe unto him? Matt. 7. 11.

8. It ought to render us ſubmiſſive, patient and contented under God's hand, of correction, or trial: as knowing, that it cannot be without very juſt cauſe, that ſuch goodneſs ſeemeth diſpleaſed with us; that we are the chief cauſes of our ſuffering, or our want; ſo that we can have no good cauſe to repine, or complain: for, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? ſince, a man* (ſuffers) *for the puniſhment of his ſins*; ſince it is *our ſins, that withhold good things from us.* Since alſo, we conſidering this attribute may be aſſured, that all God's diſpenſations do aim and tend to our good. Lam. 3. 39, 8. Jer. 5. 25.

9. It ſhould alſo in gratitude toward God, and imitation of him, engage us to be good; kind and bountifull, peaceable, and apt to forgive; meek and gentle, pitifull and affectionate toward our brethren. *To be good and mercifull, as our heavenly Father is mercifull and benign even* toward the wicked and ungratefull; to be *kind unto one another, full of bowels, forgiving one another, as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven us.* Luke 6. 35, 36. 1 John 3. 16. Coloſſ. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 32.

Jude 4. 10. Laſtly, We ought to have an eſpecial care of perverting this excellent truth by miſtakes and vain preſumptions; that we *do not turn the grace of God into wantonneſs*, or occaſion of licentious practice. Becauſe God is very good and mercifull, we muſt not conceive him to be fond, or ſlack, or careleſs; that he is apt to indulge us in ſin, or to connive at our preſumptuous tranſgreſſion of his laws. No; ἔπεται τῇ ἀγαθῷ, ἡ ἀγαθὸν, ἡ μισοπονηρία (*the hatred of wickedneſs is conſequent upon goodneſs even as ſuch*, as *Clemens Alex.* ſaith) God even as he is good, cannot but deteſt that which is oppoſite and prejudicial to goodneſs; he cannot but maintain the honour and intereſt thereof; he cannot, he will not endure us to diſhonour him, to wrong our neighbour, to ſpoil our ſelves. As he is a ſure friend to us, as his creatures, ſo he is an implacable enemy to us as impenitent rebels and apoſtates from our duty. *The wicked, and him that loveth violence his ſoul hateth.* As he is infinitely benign, ſo he is alſo perfectly *holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. He is not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs, neither ſhall evil dwell with him. The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in his ſight, he hateth all workers of iniquity. His face is againſt them that do evil.* Finally, as God is gratious to all ſuch as are capable of his love, and qualified for his mercy; ſo he is an impartial and upright judge, who will deal with men according to their deſerts, according to the tenour of his laws and ordinances; according to his immutable decree and word; ſo that as we have great reaſon to truſt, and hope in him, ſo we have no true ground to preſume upon him; vainly to trifle, or inſolently to dally with him.

Pſal. 11. 5. Hab. 1. 13. Pſal. 5. 4. Pſal. 34. 16.

But I leave this point to be farther improved by your meditations.

Grant we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be ſo grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living to the honour and praiſe of thy Name, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. Amen.

Sermon XXXVIII.

No Reſpect of Perſons with GOD.

Rom. II. 11.

For, There is no reſpect of perſons with God.

IT is an ordinary conceit, grounded on a ſuperficial view of things, that Almighty God diſpenſeth his gifts with great inequality, and dealeth very partially with men; being laviſh in his bounty to ſome, but ſparing therein to others; ſlack and indulgent in calling ſome to accompt, but rigorous and ſevere in judgment toward others.

Which

Which imagination often hath influence upon the affections and the actions of men; so that hence some men do highly presume, others are much discouraged; some are apt to boast themselves special darlings and favourites of heaven; others are tempted to complain of their being quite deserted, or neglected thereby. Psal. 73. 6.

But whoever more carefully will observe things, and weigh them with good consideration, shall find this to be a great mistake; and that in truth God distributeth his favours with very equal measures, he poiseth the scales of justice with a most even hand; so that reasonably no man should be exalted, no man should be dejected in mind, upon accompt of any considerable difference in God's regard towards him, and other persons; the which is clearly discovered by God, or merely dependeth on his will and providence. Job 31. 6.

The advantages, which one man hath above another, being estimated morally, in reference to solid felicity and content, are indeed none; or are not absolutely made by God, but framed by men unto themselves. For

God is indifferently affected toward persons as such nakedly and privately considered; or as devested of moral conditions, qualifications and actions; He in his dealing, whether as benefactour or judge, purely considereth the reason and exigency of things, the intrinsick worth of persons, the real merits of each cause; He maketh no arbitrary or groundless discriminations; he neither loveth and favoureth, nor loatheth and discountenanceth any person unaccomptably: He doth utterly disclaim partiality, or respect of persons, as a calumnious aspersion on him, and a scandal to his providence.

Such in holy Scriptures he representeth himself, upon various occasions; declaring his perfect impartiality, and that nothing beside the right and reason of cases doth sway with him; all other considerations being impertinent and insignificant to him. For instance,

It is declared, that he hath no partial respect to nations; for the piety of *Job* an *Edomite*, of *Melchisedeck* a *Canaanite*, of *Jethro* a *Madianite* were very pleasing to him; he favourably did hear the prayers, and accept the alms of *Cornelius* a *Roman* Souldier; whereupon St. *Peter* made this general reflexion, *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons; But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* (Rom. 10. 12. 3. 29.) Acts 10. 31.

He is declared not to regard the external profession of true Religion, but real practice according to it; *He rendreth* (saith St. *Paul*) *to every man according to his deeds--- tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for* (addeth the Apostle, assigning the reason of this proceeding) *there is no respect of persons with God.* (Gal. 5. 6. 6. 15. 3. 28.) Col. 3. 11, Rom. 2. 6,-- 9, 10. (10. 12. 3. 29.)

He is said not *to respect faces*, or any exteriour appearances, however specious in the eye of the world; according to that saying of God to *Samuel*, at the choice of *David* before his brethren; *Look not on his countenance, or on the heighth of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. 16. 7.

It is expressed, that he hath no respect to the outward estate, or worldly rank and dignity of men; but that Princes and Peasants, Masters and Servants, the honourable or wealthy, and the mean or poor are of equal consideration with him; *He* (saith *Job*) *accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands;* Job 34. 19. Sap. 6. 7.

and

Ephes. 6. 9. Coloss. 3. 25. 4. 1. and St. *Paul* biddeth Masters to deal fairly with their Servants, *knowing* (saith he) *that your Master is also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

We are taught, that He doth not regard even the most sacred offices, or more worthy accomplishments of men, in prejudice to the verity of things, or equity of the case; for hence St. *Paul* maintaineth his resolute behaviour toward those great pillars of Religion, St. *Peter* and St. *James*; *Of these who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's person.* Gal. 2. 6.

It is frequently inculcated, that he hath no consideration of any gifts, of sacrifices, of services presented to him with sinister intent, to compound for sin, or excuse from duty, to pervert justice, or palliate wrong; according to that [declaration of *Moses*, *The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward*; and that] charge of King *Jehoshaphat* to his Judges, *Let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed, and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* And, *Do not think* (saith the *Hebrew* Wise-man) *to corrupt* (him) *with gifts; for such he will not receive; and trust not to unrighteous sacrifices; for the Lord is Judge, and with him is no respect of persons.* Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chron. 19. 7. Ecclus. 35. 12. (Isa. 1. 3. 61. 8. 66. 3. Prov. 15. 8. 21. 27. Amos 5. 21, 22. Jer. 6. 20. Mic. 6. 7, 8. Hos. 6. 6.

In fine, it is often generally declared, that God impartially dispenseth recompences, in just proportion, according to the deeds of men: *He* (saith St. *Paul*) *that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons; And if* (saith St. *Peter*) *ye call upon the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* Rom. 2. 11. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

There is nothing more frequently asserted, or more seriously urged in holy Scripture, than this point, that God will judge, and deal with men, not according to his absolute, antecedent affections, but *according to their own works*, or the tenour of their practice, duly scann'd and estimated by the rules of justice; so that the really better man will certainly prove the happier, and the worse man shall be the more wretched: *He will reward every man* (saith our Lord) κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, *according to his practice*; *Every one* (saith St. *Paul*) *shall receive the things done in his body,* πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξε, *suitably* (in just proportion) *to his works*; and *Each man shall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν, *his own wages according to his own labour*; and *then praise* (or a due taxation) *shall be to every man from God*: *Behold* (saith He in the Revelation) *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to recompence each man,* ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἔσται αὐτοῦ, *as his work shall be.* Matt. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. Apoc. 2. 23. 20. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 8. (Jer. 17. 10. 32. 19. Psal. 62. 13.) 1 Cor. 4. 5. Apoc. 22. 12. Ἀποδοῦναι ἑκάστῳ.

Wherefore by sacred testimonies it is abundantly manifest, that impartiality is a divine attribute, and perfection of God; the which (for our greater satisfaction, and farther illustration of the point) may be also evinced by divers arguments, some proving that it must be so, others shewing that it is so; some inferring it *à priori*, from the prime most avowed attributes of God's nature; and from his relations to men; others arguing it *à posteriori*, from principal instances of God's proceedings and providential dispensations toward men.

Of the first sort are these.

1. God is impartial, because he is perfectly wise, and thence doth truly estimate persons and things.

Wisedom doth look evenly, with a free and pure (an indifferent and uncorrupt) eye upon all things; apprehending and esteeming each as it is in it self; making no distinction where it findeth none; not preferring one thing

thing before another without ground of difference in them. It doth not fix a valuation on its objects, but acknowledgeth it, and taketh it for such as it is in themselves.

Wherefore God cannot have any blind affection, or fondness toward any person, grounded on no reason, or upon any unaccountable prejudice. No person can seem amiable, or odious to him, who is not in himself truly such.

This argument is often used in Scripture; and to assure us of this truth it is there frequently affirmed, that God doth search the hearts, doth try the spirits, doth weigh the actions of men: *The Lord* (said *Hannah*) *is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: All the ways of man* (saith *Solomon*) *are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits: His eyes* (saith the *Psalmist*) *behold, his eye-lids try the children of men:* and, *O Lord of Hosts* (saith *Jeremy*) *that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart--Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:* [*I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*] 1 Sam. 2. 3. Prov. 16. 2. Psal. 11. 4. Jer. 11. 20. 20. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Jer. 17. 10.

2. God cannot be partial, because he is perfectly righteous, just and holy. This reason adjoined to the former doth make up a complete demonstration: for partiality doth proceed either from blindness of mind, or from perverseness of will; He therefore, who hath both an exact knowledge of things, and a perfect rectitude of will, can no-wise be partial; the one enabling him to judge, the other disposing him to affect things as they are and deserve; to esteem and love that which is indeed worthy and lovely; to despise and dislike that which is despicable and odious; to have no opinion, or affection toward a person, abstracted from all qualifications; such an one being no special object of a wise and just either esteem or contempt, love or hatred.

As these causes are always inseparably connected (for what is justness, but a disposition of will, to follow, without deflexion, the dictates of wisedom?) so the effect must necessarily follow; according to numberless testimonies in Scripture importing, that *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous----* but *the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.* Psal. 11. 7. (7. 11. 33. 5. 45. 7. 146. 8.) Psal. 11. 5. 5. 5. Psal. 34. 15, 16.

3. God is impartial, because he is infinitely great and potent; whence all creatures are in the same degree inferiour, at the same distance remote from him; all are equally at his discretion and disposal; he hath no need of any; what therefore should incline him to regard one before another, excepting onely goodness, wherein he delighteth? So the Wise-man discourseth, *He that is Lord of all, shall fear no man's person, neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness, for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike.* So *Moses* did imply, *The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons.* Sap. 6. 7. Deut. 10. 17.

4. God is impartial, because he is immensely good and benign; both intensively in the degree, and extensively as to the objects of his goodness; so that he favoureth all equally, because all thoroughly, so far as may well be according to their condition and capacity; whence if there be any difference or defect, the ground thereof is not in his nature or will, but in the different qualifications of Creatures. Exod. 24. 6, 7. Numb. 14. 18. Psal. 86. 5, 15. 103. 8. 145. 8.

There is a double goodness or love of God; one absolute, preceding all regard to personal qualities, or deeds; the other conditionate, and consequent

quent on ſpecial regards; in both theſe God is impartial; for the firſt is general and unconfined, according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works*; and thoſe ſayings in the Goſpel, *He is kind unto the unthankfull, and to the evil*; *He maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil, and on the good*; *and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt*; The ſecond is grounded on ſpecial reaſons of the caſe, and adapted to the rules of juſtice, demanding it; according whereto *The Lord is rich* (in mercy) *toward all that call upon him. He will fulfill the deſire of them that fear him*, and *preſerveth all them that love him.*

Pſal. 145. 9, 16. Luke 6. 35. Matt. 5. 45. Rom. 10. 12. Pſal. 145. 18. Pſal. 34. 15. Pſal. 145. 19, 20. 34. 9. 33. 18.

In the firſt there is no difference; in the ſecond the difference is made by our ſelves; being founded in our voluntary demeanour.

5. God is impartial toward all perſons, becauſe he hath the ſame (natural and original) relations toward all.

1. He is the maker and father of all; according to that of the Prophet, *Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?* and that of the Apoſtle, There is *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*; He therefore hath the ſame parental kindneſs toward all, the ſame tenderneſs for the good of each; He is not capable of that imperfection, which is obſervable in ſome parents, to be fond and indulgent to ſome children above others; but in his affection *The rich and poor* (as the Wiſe-man ſaith) *do meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.*

Mal. 2. 10. Epheſ. 4. 6. Prov. 22. 2.

Hence *Job* did collect that *God accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor*; *for* (ſaith he) *they are all the work of his hands.*

Job 34. 39.

Hence the ſame holy Man did infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own ſervants, for that God in judgment would conſider their caſe no leſs than his, upon this accompt, for *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him*; *and did not one faſhion us in the womb?*

Job 31. 13, 14, 15. Job 31. 15.

Hence the Wiſe-man, who imitated *Solomon*, did argue an equality of gratious providence toward all, *He hath made the ſmall and the great, and careth for all alike.*

Sap. 6. 7.

2. God is the common Lord of all; and therefore is concerned to protect all with the like care, to govern all with the ſame equity.

Hence St. *Paul* gathereth that God is indifferently willing to ſhew mercy, and diſpence bleſſings to all people; to confer the means of ſalvation, and to accept pious endeavours, without diſtinction of *Jew* or *Gentile*; *Is* (ſaith he) *he the God of the Jews onely? is he not alſo of the Gentiles?* and, *There is therefore no difference between the Jew and the Greek*; *for the ſame Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Rom. 3. 29. Rom. 10. 12.

Hence the ſame Apoſtle doth urge Maſters to be juſt and kind to their ſervants; for that God as the common Maſter hath an equal reſpect to both; *knowing that your Maſter alſo is in heaven, and there is no reſpect of perſons with him.*

Epheſ. 6. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 2. 3.

3. God is *the Saviour of all*; deſiring and deſigning that *all men ſhould be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*; being *willing that no man ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.*

1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Wherefore out of philanthropy and love to mankind he ſent his Son to be *the Saviour of the world*; to *give himſelf a ranſome for all men*, to *taſte death for every man.*

Tit. 3. 11. 2. 11. 1 John 4. 14. Luke 9. 56. John 3. 17. 12. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Heb. 2. 9.

And what greater inſtance could there be of perfect impartiality?

So by reaſons from the principal attributes and relations of God his impartiality may be deduced: The ſame alſo may be declared from his proceedings and dealings with men. For

1. God

1. God hath proposed to all men indifferently the same terms and conditions of obtaining his love and favour, of enjoying his bounty and mercy, of obtaining rewards and felicity from him. Clem. *Ped. l.* 4.

The same laws and rules of life are prescribed to all persons, as men, and as Christians.

The natural dictates of reason, the precepts of holy Scripture, the great moral duties of Religion, by observance whereof God's favour is retained, and salvation assured, are of general concern and common obligation to all without exception.

God hath not framed one Law, or one Gospel for Princes and great Men, another for Pesants and mean Artisans; He hath not chalked out one way toward heaven for the rich, another for the poor to walk in; But all, *high and low, rich and poor one with another*, are tied to observe the precepts of piety, of charity, of justice, of temperance, sobriety and chastity, of modesty, humility and patience; none (great or small) can otherwise than by proceeding in the common road of vertuous practice, arrive to happiness. *He that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Psal. 49. 2. Matt. 7. 21.

* *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: Enter in through the strait gate; Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life; To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life* will be conferred; These are the grand infallible maxims, the fixt irreversible decrees, expressing the general duty and doom of mankind, according to the eternal reason of things, and the declared will of God Almighty, our Sovereign Governour and Judge. Matt. 19. 17. Matt. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. Psal. 34. 12. Apoc. 22. 14. Rom. 2. 7.

Whoever it is, that will please God, that will have his love, that will be happy by his grace, must humbly submit to God's will, must faithfully obey God's laws, must carefully walk in God's way; from this course there can be no exemption, no dispensation, no special privilege for any person whatever. John 15. 14.

As all men naturally, by indissoluble bands of obligation, are the subjects and servants of God; so God indispensably and inexcusably doth require the same loyalty and fidelity, the same diligence, the same reverence from all.

Great men sometimes may live, as if they conceited themselves free from the obligations, which bind other men; as if they had not souls (as we poor mortals have) to be saved, or were to be saved in some other way; as if obedience to the divine laws doth not touch them, but onely doth belong to the commonalty; as if they had special indulgence to live in pride, luxury and sloth, might warrantably practise injustice, oppression, revenge; might *cum privilegio* be lewd and lascivious, with-hold their debts, take God's name in vain, neglect devotion and the service of God; but in thus doing they much abuse themselves; for they no less than others are obnoxious to guilt, and to punishment for such misdemeanours against the divine laws. In truth, if there be any difference in the case, it is onely this that they in all equity, ingenuity and gratitude are obliged to a more strict, more faithfull, more diligent observance of God's laws; they being more indebted to God for his special bounty to them; they having larger talents and advantages committed to their trust, their deportment being of higher consequence, and most influential on the world, they being liable to render an accompt according to that just rule, *Unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required*; whence their eminency of condition doth not excuse them from common duties, but doth Luke 12. 48.

advance their obligation, will aggravate their neglect, will enflame their reckoning, will plunge them deeper into wofull punishment; according to that of the Wise-man *A sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.*

Sap. 6. 5, 6.

2. All persons have the same means, the same aids, the same supports afforded to them, for ability to perform their duty, and attain their happiness.

The word of God, as the light of heaven, doth indifferently shine to all men, for instructing their minds, for directing their practice, for *guiding their feet in the way of peace.*

The divine grace is ever at hand ready to assist all those, who sincerely and seriously do apply themselves to serve God.

Seasonable comforts are never wanting to support those who need them, and who in their distress seek them from God, who *healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; so that when *The poor man crieth, the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of his troubles.*

Psal. 147. 3. (146. 7—) Psal. 34. 16—

The universal good Spirit of God (the fountain of light and wisedom, of spiritual power and strength, of consolation and joy) is communicated according to the needs of men, and exigencies of occasion; preventing them by direction to the right way, by reclaiming them from ill courses, by exciting in them good thoughts, and good desires; quickning their good resolutions, and assisting in the pursuit of them; enabling them to resist temptations, and to combat with their spiritual adversaries; to such best purposes the holy Spirit is given to all in needfull seasons and measures; especially to those who do earnestly seek it, do faithfully use it, do treat it well.

1 Cor. 12. 7. Luke 11. 13.

3. God hath provided, and doth propose to all men the same encouragements for obedience, the same punishments for transgression; the which being the same in kind do onely differ in degree, proportionably to the good deeds, or bad demerits of persons.

God hath appointed one heaven for all pious and vertuous persons; of what nation, of what rank, of what condition soever they are; He hath *prepared those things, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived for all that love him.* For *all* that have *fought the good fight*, and *kept the faith*, and *love his appearance, the Lord, the righteous judge, hath laid up a crown of righteousness.*

Col. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 7.

Immortality of life, an unfading crown of glory, a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, unspeakable joys, endless bliss God hath covenanted, and promised to all his faithfull servants; to all who in his way please to accept and embrace them, ὁ θέλων, *He that willeth, let him take of the water of life, freely*; And what greater rewards could there be assigned? what room is there for partiality, where all are capable of the same equally great, because in a manner immense felicity? *Many* (saith our Saviour) *shall come from the East and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham and with Isaac and with Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven.*

Luke 22. 26. Apoc. 22. 17. Matt. 8. 11. Luke 13. 29.

Lazarus the poor beggar, shall rest with the illustrious *Moses*, and the noble *Daniel*, with *David*, and *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*, and all pious Princes in the bosome of *Abraham*. The poor Fishermen, the painfull Tentmakers, the sorry Publicans shall reign together with *Constantine*, and *Theodosius*, and all those good Princes, who have faithfully served God, and promoted his glory. The rich, well using their wealth, may obtain that state, *treasuring up to themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may*

1 Tim. 6. 19. Luke 12. 33. 16. 9.

may lay hold on eternal life; The poor, contentedly bearing their condition, have a good title thereto, expressed in those words, *Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.* Luke 6. 20.

On the other hand the same dismal punishments are threatned to all presumptuous, contumacious, and impenitent transgressours of God's law, however dignified or distinguished; be they Princes, or Subjects, noble or base, wealthy or indigent; the same unquenchable fire, the same gnawing worm, the same weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the same utter darkness; the same burning lake of brimstone; the same extreme disconsolate anguish is reserved for them all: *Depart from me, Go ye cursed into everlasting fire*, will be the doom pronounced on *all the workers of iniquity*; *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish will be upon every soul that doeth evil.* Matt. 7. 23. 25. 41. Luke 13. 27. Rom. 2. 8, 9.

No regard will be had to the quality of men in this world; for *the rich man*, who *was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared sumptuously every day*, was not excused from *hell*, and *torment*; there is a *Tophet ordained of old, even for Kings*; *mighty men shall be mightily tormented*, if they have mightily sinned. Luk. 16. 19. 23. Jam. 5. 1. Luke 6. 24. Isa. 30. 33. Sap. 6. 6.

Even present encouragements of vertue in this life, The joys and comforts of God's holy Spirit, the sweet elapses of spiritual consolation in devotion, *the peace of God*, and delicious sense of his love, the cheerfull satisfaction of a good conscience, the *joy in believing* God's truth, and hoping for accomplishment of his promises, the delight in obeying God's commandments, the blessing of God upon good undertakings and happy success therein, the *co-operation of all things for good to them who love God*, the supply of all wants, and satisfaction of all desires, the experimental assurance of God's constant protection and gratious providence over those who fear him, and trust in him, (according to numberless declarations and promises in holy Scripture) are indifferently dispensed to all, who shall use the means to attain them, in way of conscientious practice. Psal. 37. 5. 1. 3. Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 19. 37. 4. 34. 10.

As correspondently the temporal discouragements from sin (crosses, disappointments, vexations, miseries) are without exception allotted to all transgressours of God's law, according to many denunciations therein. Psal. 11. 6. 73. 19. 32. 10. Isa. 48. 22. 57. 20. 54. 17.

4. The impartiality of God doth appear from his universal providence, carefully watching over all and every person, dispensing good things to each, according to his need, without distinction.

Bonus omnipotens ita curat universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos. Aug. *Conf.*

Is any man in extreme want, his liberal hand presently doth reach forth a supply; for *He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*; *He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.* Psal. 107. 9. Psal. 145. 16.

Is any man in distress? the Lord is ready to afford relief; according to that repeated burthen of the 107*th* Psalm, *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses?* Psal. 107. 9, 13, 19, 28.

Is any man engaged in sin and guilt? He is patient and long-suffering; not powring forth his anger, not with-holding his mercies; letting his Sun arise, and his shoures descend upon the most unworthy and ingratefull; this he doth so generally, that commonly by apparent events it is not easily discernible, to whom God beareth special favour; according to that observation of the Preacher, *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them*; *all things* coming *alike to all.* How then can any man complain of partiality in him, who exerciseth so unconfined bounty, clemency and patience? Psal. 34. 6. 146. 7---- 147. 6---- Psal. 103. 8--- 106. 8, 44. 78. 38. Eccles. 9. 1, 2.

If there be any considerable difference, it is onely this, that God hath a peculiar care of the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed, the helpless and Psal. 146. 147. 10. 14. 9. 9. 34. 18.

Isa. 25. 4. disconsolate, who do most need (and thence are most induced to seek) his succour and comfort; being also commonly better qualified to receive them; as is frequently declared in Scripture.

It is true, that God hath his particular friends, his favourites, his privados, whom he doth specially regard and countenance; upon whom he conferreth extraordinary boons and graces; namely those who do love, who do fear, who do trust in, who do honour him, who do obey him; concerning whom it is said, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God*; and *The Lord preserveth all those that love him*; *There is no want to them that fear him*; *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them: The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him, shall be desolate: Them that honour me, I will honour: The Lord loveth the righteous; The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry*; *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you:*

Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 20. 31. 23. Psal. 34. 9. Psal. 145. 19. Psal. 34. 22. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Psal. 146. 8. Psal. 34. 15. John 15. 14.

But evidently there is no partiality in this; for he doth not favour them irrespectively as persons, but as in justice specially qualified for favour; friendship, dutifulness, reverence toward him being the highest vertues, and arguing a mind endewed with dispositions (with equity, with ingenuity, with gratitude, with sober wisdom, with love of truth and goodness) which demand a correspondence of love and respect from God himself. And as we do not hold a man partial, who beareth a special affection and regard to those, who express good-will, who deal kindly and fairly with them, who serve them faithfully, and pay them due respect; so neither is God partial, if he doth specially bless good men upon the like accounts.

Especially considering, that God doth not so favour mere pretenders, who profess to love and honour him, but do not love true goodness; fond, superstitious, hypocritical people, who *call Lord, Lord*, but practise iniquity; who think to please him by affected services; who court and flatter him with their lips; who would bribe him with their gifts and sacrifices.

Matt. 7. 22. Luke 6. 46. Tit. 1. 16. Matt. 15. 9. Col. 2. 22. Matt. 15. 8.

5. All Christians, without distinction, have the same illustrious relations, and honourable privileges, the most great and glorious that can be imagined.

Of what greater honour is a man capable, than to be adopted into the bloud-royal of heaven, *to be called*, to be the Sons of God? *Ye are all the Sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that he might redeem us*—and, *that we might receive the adoption of Sons.*

(Col. 3. 11.) 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. 3. 26. 4. 5. Rom. 8. 16.

Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην· *Behold* (saith St. *John*) *what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the Sons of God.* This is a *privilege*, which God hath given, which *Christ* hath purchased for us all. And *whosoever received him*, he gave *them* ἐξουσίαν τέκνα, (this power, this privilege, this advantage) *that they should become the Sons of God.*

1 John 3. 1. John 1. 12. Gal. 4

To what higher dignity can any one pretend, than to be heir of a Kingdom? by the most infallible assurance that can be; by covenant, by promise of God; such are all good Christians, God's children; for *if sons, then heirs* (saith the *Apostle*) *heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ*: Heirs of God's Kingdom; for, *Hearken* (saith St. *James*) my beloved brethren, *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him.*

Rom. 8. 17. Gal. 4. 7. Tit. 3. 7. Heb. 1. 14. Jam. 2. 5.

Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.

Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.

Matt. 25. 34. Luke 12. 32.

1

I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me. 22. 29.

To what higher pitch can the most ambitious soul aspire, than to be a King?

Such St. *John* saith, that our Lord hath constituted every good Christian; *partakers*, not of a carnal, an earthly, a temporal Kingdom (which is unstable, is subject to various chances and crosses, cannot endure long, or last any considerable time) but of a spiritual, a celestial, an eternal Kingdom, *which cannot be shaken*; which hath continual rest, peace, joy. Rev. 1. 6. 5. 10. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 18. ἐπουράνιος, 2 Pet. 1. 11. αἰώνιος.

We are by God *called unto* his Kingdom and glory. Heb. 12. 28. ——*translated into the Kingdom of his own dear Son.* ἀσάλευτος. 1 Thess. 2. 12. Col. 1. 13.

To be the brethren of *Christ*; who is the Sovereign *Lord of Glory, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords,*

Is it not a considerable honour to be the friends of our Lord? so is every poor soul, which hath the conscience to serve him faithfully; for, *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.* John 15. 14.

All are Citizens, free denizens, of the heavenly Commonwealth; συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων—— Phil. 3. 20. Heb. 13. 20. 12. 22.

6. All men are liable to the same judgment, at the same tribunal, before that one impartial, inflexible Judge, who cannot be corrupted with gifts, or dazled with shews, or moved by any sinister regards. Eph. 2. 19. Deut. 10. 7. (Col. 3. 25.)

All persons must stand before that Bar upon equal ground; without any advantage; according to that representation of St. *John*; *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened ---- and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* Apoc. 20. 12.

The greatest Monarchs, the mightiest Potentates, the most redoubtable Warriours, and successfull Conquerours (the *man, who made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms,*;) *that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof*; who affected *to ascend into heaven, and to exalt his throne above the stars of God, to ascend above the heights of the clouds, and to be like the most high.* Is. 14. 16, 17. v. 13, 14. (v. 11.)

There shall they stand bare and devested of all their phantastry; their splendid pomp, their numerous retinue, their guards, their parasites.

No consideration there will be had of their windy titles, of their gay attire, and glittering pomp.

No respect will be had to the dread of their name, to the fame of their proweſs; to that spurious glory, for which they unsetled mankind, and overturned the world; their Actions will be strictly scann'd, according to the rules of God's law, and common equity.

They will be put to answer for all the violences and outrages, for all the spoils and rapines, for all the bloud and slaughters, for all the ruines, devastations and desolations their cruel ambition hath caused; for all the sins they have committed, and all the mischiefs they have done.

They who now have so many flatterers and adorers, will not then find one advocate to plead for them.

Thus it may appear that God is impartial.

But there are divers obvious exceptions against this doctrine. As,

Obj. 1. Is it not apparent that the gifts of God are distributed with great inequality?

Doth not one swim in wealth and plenty, while another coucheth under the burthen of extreme want and penury?

Are not some perched aloft in high dignity, while others crawl upon the ground, and grovel in despicable meanness?

Are

Luke 16. 19, 20, Are not ſome *clothed with purple and fine linen, and fare deliciouſly every day*; while others ſcarce find rags to cover them, and *lie at the door* begging for relief?

Do not ſome thrive and proſper in their affairs, while others are diſappointed and croſſed in their undertakings?

Pſal. 17. 10---- 73. 7. Job 21. 7---- 12. 6. Was it not truly obſerved of ſome perſons (and thoſe leaſt deſerving good fortune) *They are incloſed in their own fat---. Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have more than heart could wiſh?*

Jer. 12. 1. Hab. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 7. And whence doth this difference come, but from God's hand; *who* (as the *Apoſtle* asketh) *maketh thee to differ* from another, but God, the diſpoſer of all things?

To this exception I anſwer:

Rom. 8. 18. Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἄξια--- 2 Cor. 4. 17. 1. That temporal things are ſo inconſiderable, that they ſcarce deſerve to come into the balance, or to be computed; for they have but the ſame proportion to ſpiritual things, as time hath to eternity; or a finite to an infinite; which is none at all.

Luke 6. 24. 16. 25. Pſal. 17. 14. What partiality therefore is there, if God in mercy and patience beſtow on bad men a farthing in the temporal *conſolations* of this life (if the univerſal Father give a ſmall *portion in this life* to untoward children) while he reſerveth infinite millions for his obedient children?

2. The goods of fortune commonly are diſpenſed not by a ſpecial hand of God, but according to the general courſe of providence: And what partiality is he guilty of, who ſcattereth money into a crowd of poor people; although in ſcrambling ſome get more than other; and often the worſt (being moſt bold and fierce) do get moſt?

Eccleſ. 9. 1, 2. 3. Indeed the receiving thoſe gifts, is no ſign of God's ſpecial regard; as the *Preacher* well obſerved; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.*

4. God (as St. *Auſtin* ſaith) purpoſely doth ſparingly deal theſe things to good men, and freely beſtoweth them on bad men, to ſhew how little we ought to value them; how much inferiour they are to ſpiritual goods. For ſurely he would give the beſt things to his friends, and the worſt to his enemies.

5. Even temporal gifts are diſpenſed with a very even hand; for, if barring injudicious fancie and vulgar opinion, we rightly prize things, we compare the conveniences and inconveniences of each ſtate, it will be hard to judge which hath the advantage.

Wealth hath more advantages for pleaſure; but it hath alſo more cares, more fears, more croſſes, more dangers, more troubles, more temptations.

It hath more plenty, but withall it hath leſs ſafety, leſs eaſe, leſs liberty, leſs quiet, leſs real enjoyment.

Set the diſtraction of the rich man's mind againſt the toil of the pooreſt man's body; the nauſeous ſurfeits of one againſt the griping hunger of the other.

That which really doth conſtitute a ſtate happy, content, may be common to both, or wanting to either, as the perſon is diſpoſed.

6. The goods of fortune are not purely gifts, but talents depoſited in truſt for God's ſervice, for which a proportionable return is expected; ſo that he that hath leſs of them, hath a leſs burthen to bear, and an eaſier account to render.

7. Many gifts are not diſpenſed with perſonal regard, but for publick good; and therefore all have an intereſt in them.

The

The wealth, the power, the reputation, the proſperity of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman are not his, but his neighbours; for governing, for protecting, for encouraging, for aſſiſting whom they are conferred; the world not being able to ſubſiſt in order and peace without ſubordinate ranks, and without anſwerable means to maintain them.

Obj. 2. It is apparent, that God diſpenſeth his grace, the light of knowledge, and means of ſalvation very unequally; ſome Nations living in the clear ſunſhine of the Goſpel, while others *ſit in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death*; whole Nations being detained in barbarous and brutiſh ignorance. Luke 1. 69. Matt. 4. 16. Eph. 4. 18. 2. 1— Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

To anſwer this exception fully, would require much diſcourſe; it being a dark and difficult point; but briefly we may ſay:

1. That God diſpenſeth meaſures of grace, according to a juſt yet inſcrutable wiſedom, knowing what uſe will we made thereof, and what *fruit* men will *bear*: It may therefore be a favour not to diſpenſe light to them, who are not prepared to embrace and improve it well.

2. No man can tell what God doeth in preparation, and what obſtructions are made by men to his grace.

3. As lower means of grace are conferred, ſo proportionably leſs returns are expected.

4. How hard ſoever it may be to deſcry the reaſon of God's proceedings in this caſe, yet aſſuredly it is juſt, and our ignorance of it, ſhould not prejudice the belief of thoſe general truths, which are ſo plainly declared, concerning the univerſal benignity, and impartial equity of God.

Obj. 3. Is it not in holy Scripture ſometimes aſſerted, that God doth act arbitrariouſly, and abſolutely; diſpenſing his bounty and mercy, without regard to any quality in men, or deed committed by them, either in whole, or in proportion. ---God ſaith, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*--- Rom. 9. 15. and, *Is it not lawfull for me to do what I will with mine own?* Matt. 20. 15.

Is not a plain inſtance of this dealing alledged by St. *Paul* concerning *Jacob* and *Eſau*, that *before the children were born, or had done either good or evil*, God ſaid, *the elder ſhall ſerve the younger*; and in regard thereto (in the *Prophet*) *Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated.* Rom. 9. 13.

We anſwer briefly, that

Such expreſſions do import, not that God acteth abſolutely in the thing it ſelf, but *quoad nos*; not that he acteth without reaſon, but upon reaſons (tranſcending our capacity, or our means to know it) incomprehenſible or undiſcernible to us; not that he can give no account, but is not obliged to render any to us: that the methods of his providence commonly are inſcrutable; that his proceedings are not ſubject to our examination and cenſure; that his acting doth ſufficiently authorize and juſtifie it ſelf; that is high preſumption and arrogance for us to ſcan, ſift, or conteſt, or cavil at the equity or wiſdom of God's acting. Rom. 11. 33. Rom. 9. 20.

That God doth not act according to neceſſity, but is free in diſpenſing his mercy, and applying it to any perſon, ſo that they have nothing to challenge upon account of their own deſerts or works; but muſt refer all to his mere bounty.

However there can be nothing in theſe myſteries of predeſtination and providence, which really doth ſubvert an aſſertion ſo often clearly expreſſed, and ſo well grounded in reaſon, or the conſideration of God's nature, attributes, ordinary way of acting, *&c.*

Whatever expreſſions are repugnant thereto in ſound, whatever inſtances (depending on occult cauſes) in appearance do croſs it; it yet muſt ſtand, that God is impartially merciſull, benign, juſt, *&c.*

Obj.

(Isa. 49. 1, 5.) Jer. 1. 5. Luke 1. 15. Gal. 1. 5.

Obj. 4. Had not *Jeremy*, St. *John Baptist*, St. *Paul* absolute favours and graces conferred on them, who were *sanctified*, and separated from the womb to be Prophets and Apostles?

Jer. 1. 10. Luke 1. 16. Acts 9. 15. 26. 16---

Resp. These favours were in design not so much particular, and personal, as general and publick; those persons being raised up by God upon occasions as needfull instruments (*elect vessels*) of his providence, to instruct men, and to reduce them to God; so that God in raising up such extraornary persons, did express his common goodness to mankind.

Χαῖρε κεχαριτωμένη. Luke 1. 28.

The like may be said of that special favour which was vouchsafed to the holy Virgin, who was κεχαριτωμένη and *blessed among women*, for the general good of mankind.

The consideration of this Point is very usefull, and may dispose us to many sorts of good practice.

1. No man should presume upon God's dealing with him more favourably than with others; as if he were a darling, or favourite; that God will indulge him in the commission of any thing prohibited, or in omission of any duty.

No man should indulge himself in any thing, upon a conceit that God will indulge him; or oversee ---- and that in this sense, *He seeth not iniquity in Jacob.*

No man should be puffed up with conceit, that God hath a singular regard to him. For all such conceits are groundless and vain; in them men do miserably delude themselves.

No man can otherwise found any assurance of God's special love to him, than upon a good conscience; testifying, that he doth sincerely love God, and endeavour faithfully to obey his commandments. 1 Joh. 3. 19. 21.

3. No man should despair of God's favour; seeing God hath no particular aversation from any; but every person hath the same grounds of hope.

If we can buckle our hearts to observe our duty, we may be sure to be accepted.

Gen. 4. 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*

4. No man should be discouraged for his condition, or fortune. Since in allotting it to him God had no disfavour, nor did intend him ill.

God hath no less regard to him, than to persons of the most high, wealthy, prosperous state.

5. No man should repine, murmur or complain of God's dealing, as if he were unkindly used, more than others. For there is no such thing. God dealeth alike kindly with all.

6. No man, upon accompt of his rank, wealth, or worldly advantages should boast or pride himself; seeing thence he partaketh no more, than his meanest, and poorest neighbour, of the principal advantage, God's favour.

Jam. 1. 9. Ὁ ταπεινὸς. Prov. 11. 12. 14 21. Job 36. 5. (Jam. 2. 6.)

7. No man, upon such accompts, should despise his neighbour, *the brother of low degree*: for upon these accompts it appeareth, that the *Wiseman* saith truly, that *He is void of wisedom, who despiseth his neighbour*; seeing no man can be despicable, whom God regardeth; seeing *God* (as *Elihu* saith) *is mighty, and despiseth not any*; seeing the meanest person standeth on equal terms with the greatest in the eye of God.

Quorum fatis cælum omne vacavit. Luc. *lib.* 7.

8. Great men should not take themselves for another sort of creatures, or another race of men than their poor neighbours; that the world is theirs, and all things are for them; that they may do what they please; that they are exempted from laws, which oblige others; for in moral and spiritual accompts they are upon a level with others.

They

They are but fellow-subjects, and fellow-servants with others; all accomptable to the same Master.

9. Superiours hence should be moved to deal fairly, gently, and courteously with inferiours; seeing these are their fellow-servants; equally considerable as themselves with the great Master of the Family.

This is the use to which St. *Paul* applieth the consideration;

Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye have a Master in Heaven---- Ye Masters do the same things unto them, (that is, be conscientiously good to them, as they faithfull to you) *forbearing threatning; knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* Col. 4. 1. 3. *ult.* Eph. 6. 9.

10. This consideration should preserve us from superstition, or thinking to please or satisfie God, win his favour, or appease his displeasure, by uncouth ways, which he hath not prescribed to all men; to corrupt him by our sacrifices and oblations; our flatteries, glozings, collogueings with him; so that he will indulge us in any bad thing, or excuse us from our true duty, in regard to those affected services.

We do herein but abuse our selves; for he will not approve or accept us upon any other accompt, than of discharging our duty, being truly righteous and good. Colosſ. 2.--- Mic. 6. 7, 8.

11. It is matter of comfort and satisfaction to a man, who is conscious of his sincerity, that (whatever his condition and circumstances be) that God will have a fair regard thereto, and will not reject him.

It was so to *Job*; *Doth not God see my ways, and count all my steps-- Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity.* Job 31. 4---6.

12. The consideration of this Point should keep us from partial respects of men. Jam. 2. 1, 9. Prov. 28. 21.

Not to admire the state of great men, nor to yield them undue deferences (in prejudice to meaner persons, making greater difference than there is ground for) not to flatter, or humour them in an immoderate measure, or unbeseeming manner.

This is that which St. *James* doth urge in his 2d *Chapter*; as a very unequal thing. Οὐ μέλλ σὺ περὶ ἑλένος.

We should imitate God; we should consider that our opinions and affections should resemble his. Matt. 22. 16. Θαυμάζεν πρόσωπα.

As in exteriour judgment no respect is to be had to the rich above the poor; so neither in the interiour judgment or esteem of our mind; to which St. *James* seemeth to apply the law; *If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressours.* Jude. Levit. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. 16. 19. Prov. 24. 23. 16. 5. 28. 21. Jam. 2. 9.

13. This should keep us from envying at those who have more worldly advantages.

14. It should keep us from being offended, or scandalized, or perverted into false notions of God, upon occasion of any mysterious points, or hard expressions importing absolute and arbitrary proceedings of God, in predestination or providence. For however they are to be understood, they cannot derogate from the impartial goodness and justice of God.

15. This consideration should engage us readily to pay due respect and reverence to Princes, to Magistrates, to all our Superiours.

For hence we see, that the reason why we are commanded to honour and fear them is, not their worldly grandeur of wealth or power, (things of small consideration with God) but it standeth on a more solid ground, their sacred relations to God, as his representatives and officers; who in his name and behalf do administer Justice, and protect right and innocence, encourage vertue, maintain order and peace in the world.

Though God doth not favour their persons as rich and mighty; yet he regardeth his own character imprinted on them, he regardeth his honour and interest concerned in their respect, he regardeth the publick good of mankind, which they are constituted to promote. He considers them as the *Ministers of his Kingdom*, and instruments of conveying his benefits to mankind.

Whence he *giveth salvation to Kings*, he by his law, and by his providence doth guard and secure them from violence, from contempt, from disrespect.

In honouring them, we honour the authority of God; and the character of Divinity stamped on them; we serve our selves, for whose sake they are constituted, for whose good they watch.

Rom. 14. 4. Εἰς ἀγαθόν.

It may also engage us the more gladly and fully to yield them their due respect, to consider, that their condition is not invidious; or their case better than other mens; seeing they are accomptable to God for the advantages of it; seeing that God hath no regard to them upon accompt of that greatness which dazleth our eyes: seeing that for all the burthens they sustain, for all the cares they take, for all the pains they endure, for our good and publick service, they can receive so inconsiderable a recompence from us.

Finally,

It should engage us to be very carefull of our ways, and diligent in our obedience; seeing there is no other way possible of pleasing God, of gaining his favour and friendship, of appeasing his displeasure, of standing upright, and coming off well in his judgment; this is St. *Peter*'s inference, with which I conclude.

1 Pet. 1. 17. *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.*

Sermon XXXIX.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

Θεῷ γὰρ πολλῶν ὄντων, ὃν δὲ θαυμάζεσθαι, ἂν μὴ τις ὡς τὸ πάντων εὐεργετῶν ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

THERE are two Points of Doctrine here plainly asserted by Saint *Paul*, which I shall endeavour to explain, and to apply: *One*, that God is the Saviour of all men; *another*, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithfull. For the *first*,

God

God in many respects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men*; for the word *save* doth in a large acception denote the conferring any kind of good: as implying a removal of need, or indigence. Whence God *is the Saviour of all men* as the universal preserver and upholder of all things in their being and natural state, as it is in the *Psalm*: *Thou, Lord, savest man and beast*, or, as the general benefactour, who *is good to all, and whose mercies are over all his works*; who *maketh his Sun to rise upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is kind* and benign even *to the ingratefull and evil*: or, as the common assistent, protectour, and deliverer of all men who in need or distress have recourse unto him for succour and relief, according to what is said in the *Psalms*; *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble*: *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*

Psal. 36. 6. Old Transl. and the LXX. σώσεις, or σώζεις. Psal. 145. 9. Matt. 5. 46. Luke 6. 5.

Psal. 9. 9. 145. 18. 146. 7, &c. 107. 13, &c. 68. 19, 20.

In these kinds of senses especially respecting natural and temporal good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men*. But that he is in this place termed such in a higher sense, with regard to mercies and blessings of a more excellent kind, and greater consequence (to mercies and blessings of a spiritual nature, and relating to the eternal state of men) may from several considerations appear.

1. For that according to *Apostolical* use the word *Saviour*, *save*, *salvation*, are wont to bear an *Evangelical* sense, relating to the benefits by our Lord *Jesus Christ* procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future state of men.

2. For that questionless St. *Paul* doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the faithfull in this higher sense, and consequently he means him in the same sense (although not in the same degree and measure, or not altogether to the same effects and purposes) a *Saviour of all men*.

3. Because 'tis plain that in other places of *Scripture*, like and parallel to this, such a sense is designed. As, where in this very *Epistle*, we are enjoyned *to pray for all men*, for this reason; *For* (saith St. *Paul*) *this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge* (or acknowledgment) *of the truth*; where σωτῆρ ἡμῶν, *the Saviour of us*, seems to denote the Saviour of *us* as *men* (that interpretation best suting with the argument St. *Paul* useth) however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal advantage; as willing that all men should embrace the Gospel; which is farther most evidently confirmed by the words immediately following; *For there is one God, and one Mediatour between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*.

1 Tim. 2. 4.

4. Because according to the tenour of Scripture, and the analogy of Christian doctrine, St. *Paul*'s assertion thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent discourse may declare.

5. I might add, that *the living God* in our *Text* may very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord *Jesus* himself; not onely as partaking of the divine nature, but as exhibited in the Gospel, the word incarnate, who as such may seem commonly by St. *Paul* to be styled, *God our Saviour*; *God manifested in the flesh*; *God, that purchased the Church with his own bloud*; *Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore*. However it from the premisses is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Saviour of all men* doth relate unto our *Saviour Jesus* his undertakings and performances for the salvation of all men; since God in a sense Evangelical is no otherwise said to save, than in concurrence with what *Jesus* did undertake and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, prosecuting, and

1 Tim. 1. 1. 2. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 2. 10, 13. 2. 4. 1. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Acts 20. 28. Rom. 9. 5.

and accompliſhing our Lord's performances; *Jeſus* being the conduit through which all Evangelical Mercies and Bleſſings are from God convey'd and diſpens'd to Mankind. So that God being *the Saviour of Mankind*, is either directly and immediately, or by equivalence and in conſequence the
Epheſ. 1. 3, 6. ſame with *Jeſus* being *the Saviour of all men.*

That our Lord *Jeſus* is *the Saviour of all men*; or that the moſt ſignal of his ſaving performances do in their nature and their deſign reſpect all men, as meant for, as conducing and tending to all mens Salvation, yea and as in their own nature (ſuppoſing mens due and poſſible concurrence with them) effectually productive of their Salvation; that I ſay this ancient *Catholick* point of Doctrine (the which we profeſs to believe, when with the Church we ſay in the *Nicene Creed*----*Who for us men, and for our ſalvation came down from heaven*, and the which particularly our Church in it's Catechiſm, in the miniſtration of Baptiſm, and in the Communion, doth moſt evidently and expreſly declare it ſelf to embrace) is very true, many full and clear teſtimonies of Scripture do ſhew, many reaſons grounded on Scripture do prove; the which we ſhall firſt touch, and then farther both illuſtrate and enforce the truth, by declaring upon what accompts, or in what reſpects our Lord is the Saviour of all men; as alſo by an application to practice, declarative of its uſefulneſs and ſubſerviency to the purpoſes of piety. For immediate teſtimonies:

1. *Jeſus* is called the *Saviour* of the World; who was ſent and came into the World to ſave the World; whoſe chief performances were deſigned and directed to the Salvation of the World; *We have heard and known* (ſaid the men of *Samaria*) *that this is truly the Saviour of the World, the*
John 4. 42. *Chriſt. We have ſeen and teſtified* (ſaith St. *John*) *that the father ſent the Son*
1 John 4. 14. *to be the Saviour of the World* (that *World*, of which it is ſaid: *He was in*
John 1. 10. *the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him not.*) And;
John 3. 17. 12. 47. *God ſent his Son into the World, not to judge* (or *not to condemn*) *the World,*
John 5. 22. *but that the World by him ſhould be ſaved* (that *World*, whereof a great
Acts 10. 42. 17. 31. part he in effect would both judge and condemn for unbelief and diſobe-
Rom. 14. 10. dience, he did come primarily upon intent to ſave.) And, *The bread which*
2 Cor. 5. 10. *I ſhall give, is* (ſaith he) *my fleſh, which I will give for the life of the World:*
John 6. 52. And, *Behold* (ſaid the *Baptiſt*) *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſins of*
John 1. 29. *the World.* And, *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, not*
2 Cor. 5. 19. *imputing their offences* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *to the World*, which otherwiſe he ex-
Coloſſ. 1. 20. preſſeth by τὰ πάντα, *by him to reconcile all things unto himſelf:*) And, *He*
1 John 2. 2. *is a propitiation not onely for our ſins, but for the ſins of the whole World, (the*
1 John 5. 19. *whole World*, in contradiction from *all Chriſtians*, to whom S. *John* ſpeaketh in that place of his Catholick *Epiſtle*; that κόσμος ὅλος, of which he ſaith in that ſame *Epiſtle*, κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται, *the whole World lieth in wickedneſs.*) In all which places that the *World* according to its ordinary acception, (and as every Man would take it at firſt hearing) doth ſignifie the whole community of Mankind, comprehending men of all ſorts and qualities, good and bad, Believers and Infidels, (not in a new, unuſual ſenſe, any ſpecial reſtrained World of ſome perſons particularly regarded, or qualified) will, I ſuppoſe, eaſily appear to him, who ſhall without prejudice or partiality, attend to the common uſe thereof in *Scripture*, eſpecially in St. *John*, who moſt frequently applieth it as to this, ſo to other caſes, or matters.

2. The object of our Saviour's undertakings and intentions is deſcribed by qualities and circumſtances agreeing unto all men. All the Sons of *Adam* are by diſobedience in a loſt condition (loſt in errour and ſin, loſt
Matt. 18. 11. in guilt and condemnation, loſt in trouble and miſery) and, *The Son of*

man

man (saith *He* himself) *came to save*, τὸ ἀπολωλὸς, *that which was lost* (or whatever was lost.) *All men have sinned*, (saith St. *Paul*) *and are fallen short of the glory of God*; and, *'Tis a faithful saying* (saith the same Apostle) *and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners. God commended his love to us, that we being yet sinners Christ died for us.* All men naturally are weak, and wicked; are in a state of alienation and enmity toward God: And, *Even when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous.* All Men have souls and lives expos'd to misery and ruine: And, *The Son of man* (so he assures us) *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or *lives*) *of men.* Those propositions in form respecting an indefinite object are according to vulgar use equipollent to those, wherein the object is expressed universally. However,

Rom. 3. 23. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Rom. 5. 8. Ephes. 2. 1, &c. Rom. 5. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Luke 9. 56.

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general, and comprehensive as can be; such as these Texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful* (of all men universally, not onely of the faithful, though chiefly of them.) *God our Saviour would have all men to be saved*; *He is the mediatour of God and Men, who gave himself a ransom for all men*; *God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and he died for all, that they who live may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again. The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men* (or the grace of God, which is saving to all men, hath appeared, ἐπιφάνη ἡ χάρις Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.) *He tasted death* ὑπὲρ παντὸς, *for every man. He is the true light, that enlightneth every man coming into the World.* Which propositions do sufficiently determine the extent of our Saviour's saving performances.

1 Tim. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 4, 5. Rom. 11. 32. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Tit. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 9, 10. John 1. 9.

4. Farther yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general terms (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the members of the visible Church, which are or have been incorporated thereinto) it is expressed, that our *Saviour*'s undertakings did respect even those, who (by their own default) might lose the benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false teachers, who introduc'd *pernicious heresies*, 'tis said, that *they denied the Lord, who bought them.* And St. *Paul* implies, that by a scandalous example *a weak brother, for whom Christ died*, being induced to sin, might be *destroyed. And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.* And, *Do not* (saith *He* again) *by thy eating destroy him, for whom Christ died.* And, the Apostle to the *Hebrews* signifies concerning *Apostates*, that they do *trample upon the Son of God*, and *pollute the Bloud of Christ, by which they are sanctified.*

Væ illis, qui auctorem propriæ salutis negaverunt. Ambr. Psa. 39. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 8. 11. Rom. 14. 15. Heb. 10. 29.

5. The supposition thereof is the ground of Duty, and an aggravation of sin.

Thus doth the *Holy Scripture* in terms very direct and express declare this truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other point of Christian Doctrine can alledge more ample or plain Testimony of Scripture for it; whence it is wonderful that any pretending reverence to Scripture, should dare (upon consequences of their own devising) to question it; and many reasons confirming the same, may be deduced thence.

1. The impulsive cause, which moved God to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did, is expressed to be *philanthropy*; or love to Mankind: *But* (saith St. *Paul*) *when the kindness and love of God our Saviour unto man appeared —— according to his mercy he saved us. So God loved*

—Greg. Naz. *saith of* Julian, διὰ τοῦτο μισοῦσι Χριστὸν, ὅτι δι' ἀυτὸ σέσωσται Athan. *Orat.* 32.

Tit. 3. 4. Ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ.

John 3. 16. Rom. 5. 8. Ephes. 2. 4. *loved the World, that he gave his onely begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being sinners, Christ died for us.* It was not a particular fondneſs of affection (ſuch whereof no particular ground can be aſſigned or imagined) but an univerſal (infinitely rich and abundant) goodneſs, mercy and pity toward this eminent part of his Creation ſunk into diſtreſs and lamentable wretchedneſs, which induced God to ſend his Son for the Redemption of Mankind.

2. God declares himſelf impartial (moſt particularly) in this caſe; that as all men in regard to him ſtand alike related, and are in the ſame condition, ſo he proceeds with indifferent affection, and upon the ſame terms with all. He is equally the Lord and maker of all men; and all Men are equally involved in guilt, and expoſed to ruine; upon which grounds St. *Paul* inferreth, that as to God's regard of Man's ſalvation, there is no difference between *Jews* and *Greeks*; and by parity of reaſon there can be none between any other ſorts of perſons, antecedently to God's merciful Rom. 2. 11. intentions. *There is* (ſaith *He*) *no reſpect of perſons with God* (as to preparing the capacities and means, to propounding the terms and conditions of ſalvation, for about theſe he diſcourſes) for, *Is he* (ſaith the Apoſtle, Rom. 3. 29. aſſigning the reaſon of that aſſertion) *the God of the Jews onely, and not of* Rom. 10. 12. *the Gentiles? No: there is no difference* (ſaith *He*) *of Jew and Greek, for there is the ſame Lord of all, being rich* (rich in mercy and bounty) *unto all that call upon him*; that is by conſequence ſimply unto all; for St. *Paul* implies, that God therefore provided that all Men ſhould have the means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how ſhould they call upon him without faith*; and *how ſhould they believe without Preachers, and how ſhould there be Preachers, if they were not ſent?* whence he infers (againſt the ſenſe of thoſe *Jews*, with whom he diſputes) that it was neceſſary that Rom. 3. 22. the Apoſtles ſhould have a Commiſſion to preach unto all. And, *The righteouſneſs of God by the faith of Chriſt is manifeſted unto all, and over all that believe, for there is no difference*; *for all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God:* The relation of God is the ſame to all Men; (He *is the God and Lord of all*) the ſtate and need of all Men are the ſame; there is therefore no difference, excepting that conſequent one, which compliance or non-compliance with the conditions offered unto all doth induce. Sap. 6. 7. 'Tis true in this reſpect, what the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, ὁ πάντων δεσπότης οὐδενὸς πρόσωπον δέδοικε πάντων· *He*, that is Lord of all, *careth* (or provideth) *for all alike*; and what *Clemens Alexandrinus* ſays, as to this particular, *All things lie equally for all from God*; *ſo that no man can complain of him*; as partial to ſome, and deficient to others.

Πᾶσι πάντα ἴσα κεῖται παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ οὐδὲν αὐτὸς ἀμέμπτως. Clem. Alexand. *Strom. VII. p.* 301.

3. We may obſerve, That the undertakings and performances of *our Lord* are for nature and extent compared with thoſe of *Adam*, (who was Rom. 5. 14. τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος, *a type of him that was to come*;) As *Adam*, being a repreſentative of Mankind, did by his tranſgreſſion involve all Men in guilt, and ſubject them to condemnation; provoked God's wrath, and drew the effects thereof upon us; brought all Men under the ſlavery of ſin, and neceſſity of death; ſo was *our Lord* the *Proxy* of Mankind, and by his performances in our behalf did undoe for our advantage, what the former did to our prejudice; by his entire obedience expiating the common guilt, ſuſpending the fatal ſentence, pacifying God's wrath, reducing righteouſneſs, and reſtoring life to all that would embrace them; ſo doth Rom. 5. 18. St. *Paul* at large (in the 5th Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*) propound and proſecute the compariſon; cloſing his diſcourſe thus: *Therefore as by the offence of one man upon all men to condemnation*, ſo by the righteouſneſs

teousnes of one upon all Men to justification of life. As guilt, wrath and death forementioned were the fruits of what *Adam* did, falling upon all; so pardon, grace and life were (in design) the effects of what *our Saviour* performed relating unto all. Yea, The same comparison S. *Paul* seems to intimate in his 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, where he saith, that if one died for all, then are all Men dead; that is, *Christ*'s dying for all Men, implies all Men in a state of condemnation and subjection to death; and that inference supposes the performances of the *first* and *second Adam* to be in their nature and primary effects co-extended and commensurate. The same St. *Paul* seemeth in expres terms to say, *All men have sinned, and are fallen short* (or *are destitute) of the glory of God*; *being justified freely by his grace* (or *favour) by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* (All men are justified, that is according to God's favourable intention and design.) Yea, the very reason, why God permitted sin and death to prevail so universally is intimated to be his design of extending a capacity of righteousnes and life unto all; so St. *Paul* tells us: God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. And particularly, that by virtue of *Christ*'s performances, death is abolished, and immortality is conferred upon all men, St. *Paul* most expresly teacheth us; *For* (saith he) *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all men be made alive.*

2 Cor. 5. 15. Rom. 3. 23. Rom. 11. 32. 1 Cor. 15. 22. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Rom. 6. 23.

I observe that *Prosper* (an eager disputant about points allied to this) several times confesseth that *Christ* may be most rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the redemption of the whole world, especially upon two accounts, for his true susception of humane nature, and for the common perdition of all men in the first man; we have touchd the latter, let us add, That

Cùm itaque rectissimè dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturæ humanæ susceptionem, & propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c. Pros. *ad* Gall. *c.* 9.

4. Our *Saviour* assuming our nature, and partaking of our Flesh, *being made in the likenes of men, and found in fashion as a man*; yea endued with the passions and infirmities of man's nature, exposed to the tribulations and inconveniences of man's life) did thereby allye himself, and put on a fraternal relation unto all men. *Forasmuch* saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *as children*, (the children he means of the same father, or brethren; as the tenour of his discourse makes evident) are *partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same*; that is, graciously designing to become a brother to the children of men, he assumed all that was proper to man's nature. *God*, saith St. *Paul*, made πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, *the whole nation or race of men, dwelling upon the face of of the earth, of one blood*; and of that one blood our Saviour was pleased to take part, entitling us thereby to a consanguinity with him; and it was a *Title* of his, which he seemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of man.* He being such did sanctifie our nature, by the closest conjunction thereof to the divine nature, and rendring it more than a temple of the divinity; he dignified it, and (as that Apostle intimateth) advanced it above the angelical nature by an alliance to God himself; he thereby not only became qualified to mediate between God and man, and capable to transact that great business of man's salvation, but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to do it; for as he was *a man*, he surely was endued with the best of humane affections, universal charity and compassion, which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was *a man*, he was subject to the common law of humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common benefit of men. As he was *a brother* in relation, so he could not, he would not be otherwise in affection; he

Phil. 2. 7. Heb. 4. 15. 2. 17. 5. 2. Gal. 4. 4. Heb 2. 14, 11, 12, 16. Acts 17. 26. Heb. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 7, 16. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

Ἡ περίληψις τ σαρκὸς ὐκ ἐδόκει τ λόγον φύσει Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν ἡ γινομένη παρὰ τ λόγε πάσης ἀνθρωπότητ, &c. Athan. *c.* Arr. *Orat.* 3. *p.* 385.

he is not to be conceived deficient in performance of the offices ſutable to that condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he queſtionleſs did bear himſelf in the higheſt degree, and to the utmoſt extent; the general beneficence, which in his converſation and practice he did expreſs, doth ſignifie how large his deſires and intentions were in regard to the welfare of men; ſo that we may thence well aver with St. *Ambroſe*: *Incarnationis Dei myſterium eſt univerſæ ſalus creaturæ*; *The myſtery of God's Incarnation doth reſpect the ſalvation of all mankind*, according to his deſire and deſign.

Matt. 5. 44. Gal. 6. 10. Acts 10. 38.

Ambr. *de parad.* 8.

Ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸν ποιήσας ὁ πατὴρ οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' ἵνα τὸ κυριεῦσαι πάντων αὐτὸν, καὶ ἀμοιβεῖ πάντας διὰ τῦ χείσματος πεποίηκεν. Ath. *Orat.* 3. *in* Art. 385.

5. We are taught that *our Lord*, hath by his *ſaving* performances acquired a rightful propriety in, and a title of dominion over all men living; to him is committed the governance and protection of all mankind, as the reward of what he did and ſuffered for its ſake. *He is* called *the Lord of all men*; *and the head of every man.* It is ſaid *that all things by his Father are given into his hand*, and *put under his feet*; that *power is given him over all fleſh*; that *All authority is given him in heaven and earth*; *all judgment is committed to him.* Which priviledges, rights, dignities are declared to have been procured by the virtue of his ſaving performances, and purchaſed by the price of his bloud. *For*, *To this end*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Chriſt both died and roſe again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*; (or might exerciſe Lordſhip over both the dead and living, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ) and, *We are not our own* (ſaith *He* again) *we are bought with a price*: And, *we ſee Jeſus, for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he might taſte death for every man*, (or, for the ſuffering of death, that by God's grace he might taſte death for every man, crowned with glory and honour; for there ſeems to be ſuch a trajection in the words;) And *he was obedient unto death, even to the death of the croſs*; *therefore hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every name.* Subjection then and redemption, as they have one ground, ſo they are implied to have the ſame extent; as every one muſt call *Chriſt Lord*, ſo he may call him *Saviour*; therefore his *Lord*, becauſe his *Saviour*. And ſince *Chriſt* hath got an authority over all men, a propriety in every man; ſince he hath undertaken to govern and protect the world, he queſtionleſs as a Prince of incomparable benignity and clemency, doth ſeriouſly intend and deſire the beſt welfare of all his People; it ſurely cannot be a ſmall benefit to the community of men, that they are his ſubjects; the objects of his Princely care, and of his mercy. ——κήδεται τῶν συμπάντων· ὅτι καὶ καθηκὲ καὶ κυρίῳ πάντων ἡμεμόνι· σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν, οὐχὶ τῶν μόνων, ἀλλὰ πάντων. *He taketh care of all which doth become him that is Lord of all*; *for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all*, ſaith *Clem. Alexand.*

Apoc. 17. 14. Acts 10. 36. 1 Cor. 11. 3. Matt. 28. 18. Matt. 11. 27. John 3. 35. 13. 3. Heb. 2. 8. 1. 2. John 17. 2. 5. 22. Phil. 2. 9. Pſal. 110. 7.

Rom. 14. 9. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Heb. 2. 9. Phil. 2. 8, 9. Apoc. 5. 9, 12.

Clem. *Strom.* 7. p. 505.

6. We are commanded to *pray*, *intercede* and *give thanks* (indifferently) *for all men*, even for Heathens and Perſecutours; as for the objects of God's benevolent affection; whom *he would have to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth*; expreſſing our charity in conformity to the unconfined goodneſs of God. Very good reaſon (argues St. *Chryſoſtome*) there is why we ſhould pray for all men; for if God doth will the ſalvation of all men, we in imitation of him, ſhould will the ſame; and if we deſire it, we ſhould pray for

1 Tim. 2. 1, 4.

Μιμῶ τὸν θεὸν —— εἰ πάντας θέλει σωθῆναι, εἰκότως ὑπὲρ πάντων δεῖ δέχεσθαι· εἰ πάντας αὐτὸς ἐθελήσει σωθῆναι, θέλε καὶ σὺ· εἰ δὲ θέλεις, ἔχεις. Chriſoſt.

for it. Upon which score the *Catholick Church* hath constantly and carefully observed this precept; so the learned Writer *de vocatione Gentium* assures us: *Which law of supplication*, saith he, *the devotion of all priests, and all the faithful people doth so observe, that there is no part of the World, in which such prayers are not solemnized by the Christian people. The Church of God doth therefore supplicate not only for the Saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels, and enemies of the Cross of Christ; for all Idolators, all Persecutors, all Jews, Hereticks and Schismaticks.* And *Prosper* himself: *Setting aside*, saith he, *that distinction, which the divine knowledge contains within the secret of his Justice, it is most sincerely to be believed and professed, that God wills that all men shall be saved; since the Apostle, whose sentence that is, doth most solicitously injoyn, that which is in all the Churches most piously observed that God should be implored for all men.* So doth *he* attest the common practice, and declare the ground thereof.

Quam legem supplicationis ità omnium sacerdotum, & omnium fidelium devotio, concorditur tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit, in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur à populis Christianis. Supplicat ergò ubique Ecclesia Dei non solùm pro Sanctis & in Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, & inimicis crucis Christi, &c.

Remotâ ergò discretione, quam divina scientia intra secretum justitiæ suæ continet, sincerissimè credendum atque profitendum est Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant; siquidem Apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, solicitissimè præcipit quod in omnibus Ecclesiis piissimè custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus supplicetur. Prosp. *ad obj. Vincent.* 2.

7. For which practice, and for the confirmation of its ground (God's serious willingness and desire that men should be saved) we have the pattern of our *Lord* himself praying to his *Father* for the pardon of the worst of men, his murtherers; which as it demonstrated his Charity toward them, so it argues that he was their *Saviour*, for that otherwise he knew they could not be in any capacity of having pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose a disposition in God to grant it, and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as God requires and accepts, and which shall avail to their benefit, if toward the application thereof they perform their parts.

8. Indeed it is not easie to conceive how we can heartily pray for pardon, or for any other blessing either for our selves or for others, without supposing *Christ* to be *our* Saviour and *theirs*; without supposing God placable and well affected towards us and them in *Christ*, upon the accompt of his performances and sufferings in our and their behalf. We are to offer up all our devotions in the name of *Christ*, and for his sake must implore all mercies and blessings from God, which how can we do seriously and with faith, if we may reasonably question whether *Christ*'s merits do respect us, and consequently whether they can be available in our behalf? I will, saith St. *Paul*, that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without wrath or doubting; which precept how can any Man observe; how can any Man pray with calmness and confidence of mind, who is not assured that *Christ* is his Saviour, or that God for *Christ*'s sake is disposed to grant his requests? but this point we may be obliged to prosecute somewhat farther in the application. 1 Tim. 2. 8.

9. Either our Saviour's performances do respect all men, or some men (the far greatest part of men) do stand upon no other terms, than those of the first creation, or rather of the subsequent lapse and condemnation; being subject to an extremely rigorous Law, and an infallibly certain guilt; and consequently to inevitable punishment; being utterly secluded from all capacity of mercy, and having no place of repentance left unto them (the place of repentance being a most signal part of *Christ*'s purchase) so that if any such man should, according to the proportion of his light and ability, perform what is agreeable to God's law, doing Acts 5. 31. Luke 24. 47

what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a man he may do, what is possible is possible) in order to his salvation, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any mercy, favour or acceptance. But, beside that it is expresly said, that *God* did *shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all*; and that we are plainly enough informed, that our Lord did reverse the first fatal sentence, and hath as the mediatour between God and Man evacuated all former covenants by establishing a new one (for if any former *covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one*, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* discourseth) besides these considerations, I say, and beside that such suppositions do not well sute to the nature of God, and do not well consist with the tenour of his providence; God positively aud vehemently disclaimeth this rigour of proceeding; he both under *Law* and *Gospel* declares himself ready to admit any man's repentance; yea earnestly invites all men thereto; yea grievously explains and expostulates with men for not repenting, yea not only says it, but swears it by his own life, that he desires any wicked man should do it; He strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in shewing mercy; the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering. He declares, that he will exact an accompt of men, according to proportion, answerable to their willingness to do what they could; and to the improvements of those talents (those measures of light and strength) which they had, or might have had; that whoever is ὁ ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς, faithful in using the smallest power, shall be accepted and rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his judgment and acceptance of mens persons and performances; any man, in any nation, his sincere, though imperfect, piety and righteousness being acceptable to him; The final ruine of men is not imputed to any antecedent defect lying in man's state, or God's will, to no obstacle on God's part, nor incapacity on the part of man, but wholly to man's blameable neglect, or wilful abuse of the means conducible to his salvation: No want of mercy in God, or virtue in the passion of our Lord are to be mentioned or thought of; infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obstinate impenitency disappointing God's merciful intentions, and frustrating our Lord's saving performances, and endeavours, are the sole banes of mankind; *Here* (saith our *Lord*) *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* And, *I speak these things, that ye might be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* And, *How often have I willed to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* Of the *Pharisees* and *Lawyers* our *Saviour* said, that *they defeated the counsel of God toward themselves* (ἠθέτησαν τὴν βυλὴν θεὸν εἰς ἑαυτὸς) the counsel of God, who designed to bring them to repentance by the instruction and exhortation of St. *John* the *Baptist*. Our *Saviour* invited many to the participation of the *Gospel* (*that great Feast of fat things to all people*, as the Prophet *Esay* calleth it) but they would not come, saith the Text; he iterated his message, but they carelesly neglecting it (ἀμελήσαντες) *went away, one to his farm, another to his merchandize, and the rest took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them.* The *Sower* (our *Lord*) did sow in the *field* (*the world*) the good seed of heavenly truth, but some would not admit into their heads or hearts; from others temptation bare it away; in others woldly cares and desires choaked it; Our *Lord* spake the most convincing words, such as no man ever spake, such

Rom. 11. 32.
Heb. 8. 7.
Acts 17. 30.
Ezek. 18.
Ezek. 33. 11.
Isa. 55. 3. 7.
Mic. 7. 8.
Rom. 2. 4.
2 Cor. 8. 12.
Mat. 25. 25.
Luke 19. 17.
16. 10.
Acts 10. 34.
1 Pet. 1. 17.
John 3. 19.
John 5. 34, 40.
Mat. 23. 17.
Luke 7. 30.
Esa. 25. 6.
Matt. 22. 3, 5.
Matt. 13. 19, 38.
John 7. 46. 15.
22. 15. 24. 9. 32.

such as drew *Publicans* and *Harlots* into the Kingdom of heaven; he performed most astonishing works such as never the like were done, which were sufficient to convert *Tyre* and *Sydon*, yea to have preserved *Sodom*, but without effect, such were the invincible obstinacy, the gross stupidity, the corrupt prejudices, and perverse affections of his auditors and spectators, upon which cause our *Lord* chargeth the inefficacy and unsuccessfulness of his endeavours for their salvation. So doth St. *Stephen* call the *Jews*, unto whom the *Gospel* was offered, *hard-necked, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; such as *did always resist the holy Spirit*. St. *Paul* gives the same character of them, and assigns the same cause of their rejecting the *Gospel*. And of the *Jews* of *Antioch* 'tis said, that they did *thrust away the word of salvation, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life* (that is, disdaining to embrace the overture of everlasting life made unto them.) And, *despisest thou the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, being ignorant, that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* so St. *Paul* expostulates with the incredulous *Jew*. And, *How*, saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, *shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* so do our *Lord* and his *Apostles* state the reason of mens miscarrying in this great affair; signifying all requisite care and provision to be made on God's part for their salvation; and imputing the obstruction solely to their voluntary default of compliance with God in his conduct and management thereof.

Matt. 21. 31. John 7. 31. John 5. 44. 12. 43. Luke 16. 14. Matt. 13. 13. 23. 14. Acts 7. 51. Acts 28. 26. Acts 13. 46. Rom. 2. 3. Heb. 2. 3.

Neither are the dealings and declarations of God toward those who lived under the *Law* and *Prophets*, impertinent to this purpose; they are applicable upon consideration of party in reason, or likeness in case.

What remonstrances concerning the gentleness, kindness, and equity of his dealings, what exprobrations of their stubbornness and stupidity God did anciently make to *Israel* under that particular dispensation, (which yet in tendency and in representation may be deemed general) the same he might now use toward all mankind, under this *universal œconomy*, wherein God hath given to his *Son*, *the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession*; whereby *all the Kingdoms of the world are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ*; which hath erected an unconfined Kingdom of grace; to which all men in design and of right are subject; in respect to which every nation is in obligation and duty become the people of God. *What* (said *God* to them) *could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done, wherefore when I looked for grapes did it bring forth wild grapes! O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help. I have spread out my hands all the day-long to a rebellious and gainsaying Poople. I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye answered not; I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. When I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did chuse that, wherein I delighted not.* And, *Behold their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit.* Which passages, in many others of the like importance that occurr, do imply the large extent of God's merciful intentions; and the competency of the means, which God affords for the salvation of men; that he wants no affection or inclination to save

Pfal. 2. 8. Apoc. 11. 15. Isa. 5. 4. Hos. 13. 9. Isa. 65. 2. Rom. 10. 21. Jer. 7. 31. Prov. 1. 24, 29. Isa. 65. 12. 66. 4. 1. 18. Ezek. 12. 2. Jer. 6. 10. Zech. 7. 11, 12.

them, that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither by serious and earnest invitation, directs them by needful light and instruction, excites them by powerful arguments and persuasions; and as St. *Ambrose* speaketh, *Quod in Deo fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God shewed to all, that what was in him, he did will to deliver* (or save) *all men.* Whence he may truly and properly be called the Benefactor and *Saviour*, even of those, who by their wilful malice or neglect do not obtain salvation. For in respect to the same favours, which are exhibited and tendered to them, He is the Saviour of those, who by hearkning to God's call, and complying with God's design; by well using the means vouchsafed, and performing the conditions required, do finally attain salvation.

De parad. 8.

—ἀπολογούμενος μετὰ ἀποδείξεως ὅτι πάντα τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκοντα ὅτι σωτηρία ἦν κειμιδρόων πεποίηκεν—(Bas. in Ps. 7.)

If it be said, that these transactions do refer only to God's own people or to those only, unto whom God pleased to dispense especial revelations of truth and overtures of mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general extent of God's design, or the vertue of *Christ*'s performances in respect to all mankind; we may to this suggestion rejoyn, that by observing the manner of God's proceedings toward them, unto whom he openly declareth his mind and will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what rules, or upon what accompts he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of reason, and parity or disparity of the case. As to God's affection, it is the same every-where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be *good to all*, and *merciful over all his creatures* (as the *Psalmist* tells us) unto which disposition his providence yields attestation; for οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκεν ἀγαθοποιῶν, *he did not leave himself without testimony, doing good to all*, as St. *Paul* tells us; although he doth not dispense his favours in the same method, or discover his meaning by the same light, or call all men to him with the same voice and language.

Psal. 135. 9.

Acts 14. 17.

Gratia Dei nullis seculis se negavit, virtute unâ, quantitate diversâ, concilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. II. 5.

Adhibita est semper universis hominibus quædem supernæ mensura doctrinæ, quæ etsi occultioris parciorisque gratiæ fuit, sufficit tamen quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium. II. 15.

Neither was mankind ever left destitute of that *divine grace*, which (as the good *Writer de vocatione Gentium* saith) *never denied it self to any ages, with the same virtue, in different measure, with an unchangeable counsel, and multiform operation.* So in one place; and in another, *There was always* (saith *he*) *dispensed to all men a certain measure of instruction from above, which although it came from a more occult and sparing grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.*

Rom. 2. 14. 15.

——*nulli nationi hominum benignitatis suæ, dona subtraxit, ut propheticas voces & præcepta legalia convincerentur in elementorum obsequiis, & testimoniis accepisse. De Voc. G. I. 5.* Rom 1. 19,

Comparing the different states of men, we may substitute with St. *Paul*, for the *law of revelation* engraved upon *tables*, the *law of nature* written in mens *hearts*; for *prophetical instructions* the *dictates of reason*; for *audible* admonitions and reproofs, *secret* whispers of grace, and checks of conscience; for *extraordinary* instances of divine power, the *ordinary* works of the creation (*by which God's eternal divinity and power are discernable*) for the *special* and occasional influences of providence, the *common* and continual expressions of divine beneficence; then allowing for the disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other are not void of use or virtue; by them all men in all places *may seek God*, if

Acts 14. 17.

Acts 17. 27.

if haply they may feel him and find him; ye may (as St. *Paul* implieth) be able to know God, and induced to serve him; to thank him and to glorifie him in some measure; in a measure answerable to such light and strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with them. If their helps be deemed more low and scanty, their duty in proportion is less high, and their accompt will be more easie. Enough certainly they have to excuse God from misprision of not having provided competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable; and what they have is an effect of God's mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this *Point* we may have occasion afterward to say more; I shall now only add; that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another argument to confirm our doctrine; which is this:

Rom. 1. 18, 20. Rom. 2. 15, 26. Rom. 1. 21. Rom. 1. 20.

10. If *our Lord* be the *Saviour* of all those to whom God's truth is declared; and his mercy offered; or, if he be the *Saviour* of all the members of the visible Church; particularly if he be the *Saviour* of those, who among these, rejecting the overtures and means of grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the *Saviour* of all men. But *Our Lord* is the *Saviour* of those persons; and therefore he is *the Saviour of all men*. The *assumption* we assayed to shew in the last argument; and many express testimonies of *Scripture* before-mentioned establish it; the common style of Scripture doth imply it, when in the *Apostolical* Writings to all the visibly faithful indifferently the relation to *Christ* as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving performances is supposed, the title of σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι (with others equivolent, of *justified*, *sanctified*, *regenerated*, *quickned*, &c.) are attributed. And in our Text God is said to be *the Saviour* chiefly τῶν πιστῶν, *of the faithful*; which word in its common acception denotes all visible members of the Christian communion. And for its confirmation we adjoin: The *Apostles* at first, and the *Church* ever since after them (except some heterodox people of late) have professed readily to confer holy *Baptism*, and therein to dispense remission of sins, together with other Evangelical graces and privileges, to every man professing his faith in *Christ*, and resolution to observe *Christ*'s law, upon this supposition, that *Christ* is the *Saviour* of all such persons, and by his salutary passion hath purchased that remission for them; although the dispensers of these graces could not discern what decrees God in his secret providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final state; yea although according to the Judgment of Prudence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that many of them should be of those, who (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh) *would draw back unto perdition*, who (as St. *Peter* implies some might and would do) would forget the purgation, which they had received of their sins. That in thus doing the Church proceeds upon a persuasion that *Christ* is truly the Saviour of all its visible members, duly admitted and incorporated thereinto, the thing it self plainly signifies; the tenour of its practice makes palpable; the forms of speech used in its holy administrations (of prayers, of sacraments, of exhortations) do suppose, or express. For how can each member singly be asserted in holy Baptism to be washed from his sins, and sanctified to God, and made regenerate or adopted into the number of God's children, and made partaker of *Christ*'s death? how can thanksgiving in the common name, in most general terms, be offered up for *Christ*'s saving performances? or the holy bread and cup be imparted to each communicant

Heb. 10. 39. 2 Pet. 1. 9.

as

as symbols and pledges of *Christ*'s charity and mercy towards him? how can every Christian be instigated to obedience in gratitude to *Christ*, and those who transgress *Christ*'s laws, upbraided for their ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing, despising, or abusing him and his salvation? how can such things be said and done with any truth or consistency; yea without forgery and mockery, if every baptized Christian hath not an interest in our Lord's performances; if *Christ* be the Saviour only of an uncertain and unknown part in the Church? This consideration of the Churches practice hath made even the most vehement assertours of St. *Austin*'s doctrine (strained to the highest pitch) in the more antient and modest times, fully to acknowledge this position; that *Christ* is the redeemer of every member of the visible Church, as appears by this remarkable decree of the Council of *Valentia* in *France* (consisting of the Bishops of three Provinces, favourers of *Godscalous* his opinions.) *We also do believe it most firmly to be held, that all the multitude of the faithful, being regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly incorporated into the Church, and according to the Apostolical doctrine baptized into the death of Christ, is by his blood washed from their sins.* Because there could be no true regeneration, unless there were made also a true redemption; since in the Sacraments of the Church there is nothing empty (or vain) nothing ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and supported by its own very truth and sincerity. Yet that out of the very company of believers and the redeemed, some are eternally saved, because by God's grace they faithfully abide in their redemption, bearing the Lord's speech in their hearts, *He that perseveres to the end shall be saved*; and that others, because they would not abide in the salvation of the Faith, which they at first received, and did rather chuse to frustrate the grace of redemption by evil doctrine or life, than to keep it, do no-wise arrive to the plenitude of salvation, and to the perception of eternal beatitude. 'Tis then a Catholick and true doctrine, that at least *Christ* is a Saviour of all appearing Christians; and supposing the truth thereof, I say that by consequence he is also the Saviour of all men. For it appeareth thence, that the design of our Saviour's Performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any special love, or any absolute decree concerning those Persons, who in event shall be saved; since according to that supposition it extendeth to many others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural goodness and common kind affection toward mankind; from the compassion of a gracious Creatour toward his miserable creature, whence all men are concerned and interested therein. Why God's merciful intentions were not explicitly declared and propounded to *Socrates* and *Epictetus*, as they were to *Judas Iscariot* and *Simon Magus*, is another question, which we may afterward in some manner assoil; at present, it suffices to say, that the overture of mercy made to such wretches doth argue God's kind disposition and good intention toward all men; so it did in St. *Ambrose* his opinion; who says, that our Lord ought not to pass by the man who should betray him, that all men might take notice, that in the choice even of his traytour, he did hold forth a pledge or mark of all mens being to be saved.

Anno 855.

Item firmissimè tenendum credimus, &c. suprá.

Et ideò nec proditurum debuit præterire ut adverterent omnes, quod in electione etiam proditoris sui servandorum omnium insigne prætendit. Ambr. *de parad.* 8.

But the truth of this doctrine will farther appear by the declaration and surveyal of those respects according to which *Christ* is represented the Saviour of men, as also by considering how useful and conducible to piety this doctrine is, as ministring grounds and obligations, encouragements

courageements and motives to the practice of most considerable duties required from all men. But these things must be reserved to another occasion.

Sermon XL.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

—— The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

THAT our Lord *Jesus* is the Saviour of all men, we have before from plain testimonies of holy *Scripture*, and from some arguments grounded there, assayed to shew. The same will be made farther apparent by considering the respects according to which he is such; and those we may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men, for that he hath rendred all men *salvabiles*, capable of salvation; and *salvandos*, designed to salvation. For that he hath rmeoved all obstacles peremptorily debarring men from access to salvation, and hath procured competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For that he hath rescued mankind out of that dead and desperate condition, wherein it lay involved; being *the bread of God*, who *hath descended from heaven, that he might give life to the world*, as he saith of himself. For that he hath performed whatever on his part is necessary or fit in order to salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and compliance with those reasonable conditions, which by God's wisdom are required toward the instating men into a full and immediate right to salvation, or to a complete and actual fruition thereof. He made the way to happiness plain and passable: levelling the insuperable cliffs, and filling up the *chasms*, and rectifying the obliquities, and smoothing the asperities thereof, as the *Prophet* foretold; so that all men, who would, might conveniently walk therein. He set the doors of *Paradise* wide open, so that who pleased might enter in; all the bonds and restraints under which men lay, he so far loosed, that any man might be free, who would concur to his own liberty and enlargement. All the protection, and encouragement which was needful toward obtaining salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one, that would embrace and make use of them.

John 6. 33.

Luke 3. 5.

Ἡ γῆ ἀντὶ κατάρας ἐυλόγηται, ὁ παράδεισος ἠνοίγη, &c. Athan. *in pass.*

Luke 4. 18. Αἰχμαλώτοις ἄνεσιν ——

In

In respect to which performances he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, altho all men do not in effect become saved. For the estimation and denomination of performances are to be grounded upon their own nature and design, not upon events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary behaviour of men. As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accompted a benefactor and liberal, altho his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens the prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the Patient will not use it, deserves the honour and thanks due to a Physician; so is *our Lord* in regard to what he hath performed for men, and offered to them (being sufficient to prevent their misery, and promote their happiness) to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged their *Saviour*, although not all men, yea although not one man should receive the designed benefit. Accordingly we may observe, that in the Scripture style, those persons are said to be saved, who are only in a way toward salvation, although they do not arrive thither; and the means conducing to salvation are said to save, although their effect may be defeated; σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι are terms applied to all Christians, and *Christ* is ὁ σώσας, *he that hath saved them*; and *Faith* is said to have *saved them*, although some of them εἰκῆ ἐπίστευσαν, have *believed in vain*, or to no effect, forsaking and renouncing their faith; and *Baptism* save them, who partakes it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the mire. And as our *Lord* is so termed a *Saviour* in respect to them, who are by faith and admission into the Church put into a more near capacity of salvation, as St. *Paul* speaketh: ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία, ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν (*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*;) so is he in respect of all those, who are in any capacity thereof, although a more remote one.

Acts 16. 17. Καταγγέλλουσιν ὁδὸν σωτηρίας.—
1 Cor. 1. 18.
Acts 2. 47.
Apoc. 21. 29.
Eph. 2. 5.
2 Tim. 1. 9.
1. Cor. 15. 2.
Tit. 3. 8.
1 Pet. 3. 21.
2 Pet. 2. 22.
Rom. 13. 11.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the respects in which he is *a Saviour of all men*, or the particular benefits and advantages conducing to salvation, which by his performances accrue to mankind; for πάμπολυ τῶν σωτηρίαν ἁπάσῃ χαρίζεται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, *In very many ways he bestoweth salvation upon all mankind*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks.

Clem. Alex. *Padag.* 11.

1. Our *Lord* is *the Saviour of all men*, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great provocations was justly displeased and angry with man, who had averted his face, and withdrawn his favour from mankind, whom our apostasie and rebellion had rendred a stranger and an enemy to us) hath deposed his wrath toward mankind, hath conceived a kind affection to it, doth cast a favourable aspect upon it; being throughly reconciled and made a friend thereto by our Saviour's mediation. *This is my beloved son*, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, *in whom I have been well pleased*, was the attestation given from God to our Lord; the meaning whereof in regard to men the holy choir of Angels did interpret, when after the gladsome report of his birth (that *great joy, which should be to all people*) they sang, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will toward men.* Which St. *Paul* farther declareth, when he saith, that by him εὐδόκησε, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all things, upon earth, and in heaven; and when he saith, *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *When we were enemies* (saith he again) *we were reconciled to God by the death of his son: When we were enemies*, that implies God antecedently to any man's conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all men, or toward those, whom St. *Paul* speaketh unto, as men; so the reason of the case doth import, and so the analogy which St. *Paul* immediately

Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18.
Luke 2. 10, 14.
Col. 1. 20.
Eph. 1. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 29.
Rom. 5.

ately after propounds between the results of *Adam*'s transgression and our *Saviour*'s obedience (as to provocation and reconciliation, to condemnation and absolution, to the intents of bringing death and life upon all men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal good-will to mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the welfare of all men, and is displeased with the ruine of any man; that he *would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*, because *there is one mediatour between God and man*; *that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance*; this he affirms, yea (for the confirmation of our faith and our consolation therein) he in the *Evangelical Prophet* swears it, *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* So far toward our salvation is done, God meets us half way; he is reconciled unto us, it remains only that we be reconciled to him; that we hearken to the Embassie from him: *Be reconciled to God.*

1 Tim. 2. 4.
2 Pet. 3. 9.
Heb. 6. 16, 18.
Ezek. 33. 11.
2 Cor. 5.

2. *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men*, by satisfying the divine justice, and repairing God's honour in their behalf. The disloyal and ingratefull behaviour of man had so wrong'd, so endamaged, so dishonour'd God (had so abused the goodness, disparaged the wisdom, slighted the power, impeached and slurr'd the authority of his Creator, had so prejudiced all the rights and interests of God) that by the divine wisdom it was thought fit, that he should not be restored into a capacity of mercy and favour, without a signal compensation made, and an exemplary punishment undergone, whereby the right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of goodness and dislike of wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated, and every creature in heaven and earth should be solemnly admonished of its duty; of the reverence and obedience it owes to the great Creator, of the heynous guilt and horrible mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a compensation man was no-wise able to make, or fit to undergo such a punishment: Our *Saviour* therefore, out of infinite pity and charity, did undertake both; by a voluntary condescension putting himself into the low and weak state of man; subjecting himself unto that Law which man was obliged unto, and suffering the pains which man had deserved. This he was pleased to do in man's behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. His incarnation (or exinanition of himself, as St. *Paul* calleth it) was an act of that high duty and goodness, that it in virtue surpassed all the obedience, which all creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more satisfaction and more honour than the joynt endeavours of all the world could confer. His with so intense charity and chearfulness fulfilling all righteousness did far more please God, than all our most exact obedience could have done; his enduring bitter pains aad disgraces (considering the infinite dignity of his person, his near relation and dearness to God, his perfect innocence and rectitude, yea his immense charity, contentedness and patience) more than countervailed the punishment due to the sins of all men. Such a payment was more than served to discharge all our debts, (it serv'd to purchase an *overplus* of graces and blessings) so rich a price was more than sufficient to ransome all the world from captivity; so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a Sacrifice might worthily expiate and attone all the guilts of men.

Λοιπὸν δ' οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐκεῖσε χεῖ τὰ ἴδια πάθη ἔφυσαν, ἁμαρτωλοὶ καὶ νεκροί· ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ τῆς λόγου δύναμιν ἀφθάρτους καὶ ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀπαθεῖς ἐν παντὶ διαμένειν. Athan. *in* Arian. Orat. 4. 485.

Τότε γὰρ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ κατάρα ἐλύετο, καὶ θνητοὶ κατεφύγοντο καὶ ἐδικαιοῦντο δειλαβεύοντες, καὶ τὸ χειρόγραφον τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τῷ σταυρῷ προσηλοῦτο, &c. Chrysost. *in* John 1. 14. Phil. 2. 7.

Ἡ ἔνσαρκος παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος καὶ θανάτου λύτρον καὶ κλῖσις πάσης σωτηρία γέγονεν. Athan. *ad Adelph. Ep.*

Vide Cyrill. *in Eph. Conc.* p. 133.

Δικαιοῦσθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον φύσιν, &c.

Eph. 5. 2.
Heb. 10. 10.
9. 12.
1 Pet. 1. 19.

Now if we enquire what our Saviour did redeem, the consideration of what he paid may (as St. *Austin* tells) help to inform us; *Quæritis quid emerit? videte quid dederit, & invenite quid emerit.* Do ye see (saith he) *what he bought? see what he gave, and find what he bought.* However, that as the value and sufficiency of our Lord's performances, so the design and effect thereof did reach so far in regard to man; that his charity was no less extensive than his performance was complete, for our good, the holy *Scripture* teaches us. For, *He is the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,* (saith the *Baptist.*) And, *The bread* (saith *he*) *which I gave is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *He is a propitiation* (saith St. *John*) *for our sins; and not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.* And, *He is the Mediatour of God and man, who gave himself* ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, *a ransome,* in the stead, and *for all men* (saith St. *Paul.*) And, *He tasted death for every one* (saith the *Author* to the *Hebrews.*) And, He was *that one man,* who, as it was *expedient,* did *dye for the whole nation* of men. And, *God was in him reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by him be saved* (or freed from condemnation.) And, *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one mercy came upon all to justification of life.* The end we see of our Saviour's performances was, that he might *wipe* off the guilt of sin from all mankind, that he might reverse the condemnation passed thereupon, and that he might remove the punishment due thereto; or, that absolving the first man's sin, he might take it away from the whole race (as St. *Athenatius* speaks.)

All men have sinned, and come short, (or are destitute) *of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace, by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He was born under the law, that he might redeem those which were under the law. He that knew no sin, was made sin* (was punished and dealt with as a sinner) *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* (that we might be capable of being esteemed and dealt with as righteous by God upon this accompt.) So that the result is, Divine justice being fully satisfied, and the honour of God fully repaired (in regard to all sins past and future) the mouth of vengeance being stopped, the claims of death and hell being evacuated, that general sentence of condemnation (pass'd upon all the sons of *Adam*) is suspended, death ceases to reign by any just power, or inevitable necessity; (it is, as St. *Paul* saith, abolished or abrogated as to any lawful right, or necessary force it hath) the rigour and severity of that law, which upon pain of death exacteth most punctual obedience (and which consequently doth expose all men to unavoidable condemnation is tempered and abated, a foundation is laid for the shewing mercy, and granting pardon. In respect whereto,

3. Our *Lord* is *the Saviour of all men,* as having in the behalf of mankind transacted and ratified a new covenant, very necessary for, and very conducible to the salvation of mankind; whereby salvation is made attainable, and is really tendred unto all, upon feasible and equal conditions. According to the purport whereof upon any man (however stained or loaded with the guilt of most heinous transgressions) his embracing the overtures thereof, consenting to, and complying with the terms propounded therein, that is, sincerely believing, and seriously repenting; returning to God with hearty desires and earnest resolutions to serve him; God is ready to dispense mercy and pardon, and immediately receiveth the person

Aug. *in* Psal. 95. Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμῳ ὅλῳ ἐλυτρώθη· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἀνθρώπου λύτρα, ἀλλὰ υἱὸς θεοῦ μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπὲρ ἁπάντων, &c. Cyrill. *Cat.* 13.

John 1. 29. 6. 51. 1 John 2. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 2. 9. John 11. 50. 18. 14. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 29. Rom. 5. 17.

Ἵνα ἐκείνου λύων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ παντὸς αὐτὸν ἄρῃ τοῦ γένους. Athan. *in pass.*

Rom. 4. 23. Gal. 3. 13. 5. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Gal. 3. 10, 12. Rom. 10. 5.

son into grace and favour with him; yea, the man continuing to perform a faithfull (though imperfect) obedience, an obedience sutable to man's natural infirmity and frailty, and proportionable to the assistances afforded him; God farther promiseth to bestow inestimable blessings and rewards of joy and happiness. That covenant which the *Prophets* implied of old, when (beside, and beyond what the *Jewish law* did import) they Preached thus, ----*Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to* Esa. 1. 16. *do evil* ---- *though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.* And, *Let the* Isa. 55. 7. *wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*; And, *If the wicked man will turn from all his sins, that* Ezek. 18. 21. *he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawfull and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die* (so God in *Esay* and *Ezekiel* declareth his intention to proceed with men, avowing that way of his to be most equal and fair.) This is *that Covenant* which our Lord commanded his Apostles to declare and propound to all mankind; *Go ye* (said Mark. 16. 25. he to them) *into the whole world, preach the doctrine to every creature*; that Gospel, according to which, as it is expressed in St. *Luke*, *repentance* Luke 24. 47. *and remission ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*; in respect to which St. *Peter* says, that *God hath exalted* our Acts 5. 31. Lord *to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and remission of sins*; (*to grant repentance*, that is, (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* and *Clemens Romanus* speak) μετανοίας τόπον, room for repentance, or capacity to receive pardon upon repentance) concerning which *Covenant* that *Clemens* (the fellow-labourer of St. *Paul*, and whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* calleth an *Apostle*) in that excellent, admirable and almost Canonical *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, which (as *Eusebius* and *Hierome* tell us) was anciently publickly read in most Churches, hath these remarkably full and clear expressions; *Let us* (saith he) *look stedfastly upon the blood of Christ, and let us see how pretious to God his blood is, which being shed for our salvation, did bring the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us attentively regard all ages, and observe that in every generation the Lord granted place of repentance to them, who would turn unto him.* This is that *new* and *better Covenant, established upon better promises* (cancelling all former, exceptionable, imperfect and ineffectual compacts, referring to man's interest and duty) about which the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* discourseth, and Heb. 8. 6. 9. 15. 12. 24. 7. 22. whereof he calleth *our Lord* the *Mediator* and *Sponsor*; in regard to which 2 Cor. 3. 6. St. *Paul* calleth him the *Mediator between God and man*; plainly declaring all men to have a concernment and interest therein; for this supposition he useth as an argument proving God's universal desire of man's conversion and salvation: *Who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* By virtue of which *Covenant* it is, that any such degrees of love or fear toward God (such as men are capable of) are available, any righteous performances, such as our weakness can produce, are acceptable, any honest endeavours do receive countenance and encouragement; and that (as St. *Peter* observed) *in every na-* Acts 10. 34. *tion he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him*; although his fear of God be not so intense, or pure; his righteousness not so exact

Phil. 4. 3. Θαμμαόα. Euseb. Ἐν πλείσταις ἐκκλησίαις. Euseb.

Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἴδωμεν ὡς ἔστι τίμιον τῷ Θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκχυθὲν, παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὅλην ἐπέτυχεν. Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς γενεὰς πάσας, καὶ καταμάθωμεν ὅτι ἐν γενεᾷ καὶ γενεᾷ μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐπιστραφῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν. Clem. *ad* Corinth.

Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollutum, sed æqualiter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari. Hier. *ad* Aug. *Epist.* XI.

exact and unblameable, as according to extremity of law and duty, they should be. From which *Covenant* so far as is any man, according to God's intention and desire, from being excluded, that all men are seriously invited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly intreated to enter into it, and to partake the benefits exhibited thereby. Every man that feeleth himself to want those benefits, and is desirous of mercy and ease from the guilt and burthen of his sins, may come and welcome. *Hoe every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*; So the *Evangelical Prophet* proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him come to me and drink*, crieth *our Lord*; and, *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* (Δεῦτε πάντες, *Come all to me:* All men therefore (saith *Origen*) who from the nature of sin do labour and are burthened, are called to that rest; which is with the word of God.) And, *in Christ's name* (saith St. *Paul*) *we are Embassadours, as that God by us intreateth, we pray for Christ be reconciled to God*; the purport of which Embassy, together with its extent, he otherwhere thus expresseth, κηρύσσειν πᾶσι πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν, *He now proclaimeth to all men every where that they should repent*; he consequently holds forth to all the benefits annexed to repentance. But of this we spake formerly.

Isa. 55. 1. John. 7. 37. Mat. 11. 28.

Πάντες ἂν οἱ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὴν τῆς ἁμαρτίας φύσιν κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι καλοῦνται ὅτι τῷ παρὰ τοῦ λόγου τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναπαύσει. Orig. *in* Cels. 3.

2 Cor. 5. 20. Acts 17. 30.

4. Our *Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men* as having purchased and procured for them competent aids, whereby they are enabled to perform the conditions required of them in order to their salvation; to acquire a sufficient knowledge of their duty, to subdue their bad inclinations and lusts, to withstand temptations; or briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their sins, and acceptably to perform their due obedience. The truth of this point, taking in the consideration of man's natural state, may by good consequence be inferr'd from the truth of the Points foregoing. If men are naturally so dead in trespasses and sins, so enslaved and sold under sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind that they cannot well discern what they should do, so corrupt and weak that they cannot perform what they know and confess to be good (as St. *Paul* affirmeth men to be) and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the duties acceptable to God, and requisite by his appointment toward their salvation, than either our Lord hath provided for them a communication of grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural impotency, or all his designs for their good are imperfect or inconsistent (aiming at an end, without proving requisite means, or removing necessary obstructions) and his performances, whereby the forementioned benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God being appeased, and become well-affected to man's salvation, divine justice being satisfied, the rigour of law being mitigated, repentance being made available, and an obedience, agreeable to man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate results of our Saviour's transactions for man, would signifie nothing in regard to him, who still lieth under a necessity of sinning, or an inability of performing that, which is indispensably exacted from him toward a complete enjoyment of those benefits and favours. In vain is the debt paid, and the bond cancelled, and the prison set open, and liberty proclaimed, and the prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the fetters, which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may do it. But our Lord hath surely laid his designs more advisedly, and

Eph. 2. 1. Colos. 2. 13. Rom. 7. 14, 15. Eph. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 4 6. 2 Pet. 1. 19. &c.

Ὁ δὲ τὰ μὲν χερσὶ ὁλίσθος αὐτοχυεῖ κἀπὶ γλαῦκας ἔρχον. Max. Tir. *dis.* 22.

Si Deus non operatur in nobis nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac justitia nihil rectum. De Voc. Gent. I. 8.

and hath prosecuted his work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a competency of grace and spiritual assistence is by virtue of our Saviour's performances really imparted to every man, qualifying him to do what God requires, and is ready to accept from him in order to his welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his holy Spirit (that fountain of all true goodness, of all spiritual light, strength and comfort) like the Sun, to shine, to warm, to dispence benign influences over the world; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously; and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one place, as another; which holy Spirit, as it is in its essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its energy, incessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisdom ordereth) upon the minds and affections of men, infusing good thoughts and motions, impressing arguments and motives to good practice, cherishing and promoting good purposes; checking bad designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad courses. Our reason, however aided by exteriour instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty temptations, oppositions and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. So that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. That to these purposes the holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible members of the Christian Church we have plainly declared in Scripture; It was a promise concerning the Evangelical times that God would pour forth his spirit upon all flesh; The collation thereof is a main part of the Evangelical Covenant (into a participation of which every Christian is admitted) it being the finger of God whereby God's law is impressed upon their inward parts, and engraven in their hearts (as the Prophets describe the effects of this Covenant.) And the end of our Saviour's passion is by St. *Paul* declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*; that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the Apostolical Ministery (that is, preaching the Gospel, and dispensing the privileges thereof) is therefore styled, διακονία πνεύματος, *the ministery of the Spirit*. And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost* is (according to the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) part of the character of a visible Christian (such a Christian, who might παραπεσεῖν, *fall away*, as he supposeth, and *re-crucifie the Lord, and expose him to shame*;) and St. *Peter* makes reception of the *Holy Ghost* to be a concomitant or consequent of *Baptism*; *Repent*, saith he, *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*; *for the promise* (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called, *the spirit of promise*, peculiar to the Gospel) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* (That is, the *Holy Spirit* is promised to all, how far distant soever in time or place, who shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and accordingly St. *Paul* saith of *Christians*, that *God according to his mercy hath saved us by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, And, *Know ye not* (saith he to the *Corinthians*) *that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?* (that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common property and privilege of *Christians*, such as ye profess your selves to be?) And the union of all Christians into *one body*, doth, according to St. *Paul*, result from this *one Spirit*, as a common soul imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the whole body, and every

Τοῖς εὖ βεβιωμένοις ἐπαινημένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὴν λοιπὴν οὐσίαν ἐμπνεῖ. Clem. Alex. *Strom. VII.* p. 523.

Joel 2. 28. *Acts* 2. 28.

Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 11. 19. Heb. 8. 11. 2 Cor. 3. 3. Gal. 3. 14.

1 Cor. 3. 8. 1 Thess. 2. 3.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

Acts. 2. 38.

Eph. 1. 13.

Tit. 3. 4.

1 Cor. 3. 16.

2 Cor. 12. 13.

every member thereof. For *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one spirit.* And it hath been the doctrine constantly with general consent delivered in and by the Catholick Church, that to all persons, by the holy mystery of *Baptism* duly initiated into *Christianity*, and admitted into the communion of *Christ*'s body, the grace of the *Holy Spirit* is communicated, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue, which they undertake; and continually watching over them for accomplishment of those purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench; but to use it well, and improve its grace to the working out their salvation. Thus much concerning the result of our Saviour's performances, in this kind, in respect to the community of Christians, we learn from the holy *Scripture* and *Ecclesiastical Tradition* interpreting it; whence we may discern, that the communications of grace do not always flow from any special love or absolute decree concerning men, but do commonly proceed from the general kindness and mercy of God; by our Lord procured for mankind; and consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of this nature is to the same purpose, from the same source, and upon the same accompt, also granted and dispensed to others. Unto *Christians* indeed this great benefit (for the reward, the encouragement, the support of their faith; and for promoting their obedience, who are in a nearer capacity and more immediate tendency to salvation) is in a more plentiful measure, and a more conspicuous manner dispensed; but that besides that dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expressly promised, yet really imparted) communications of grace, in virtue of our *Saviour*'s merits, there are (beside the main reason alledged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all men) divers good inducements to believe. For even those *Christians*, to whom upon their faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous operations of God's grace (opening their minds, inclining their heart, and tempering their affections) induced to embrace *Christianity*, faith it self being a gift of God, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. And before our Saviour's coming all good men have thereby been instructed and enabled to do well. And before any special revelation made, or any particular covenant enacted (before the enclosure of a particular People or Church, the confinement of God's extraordinary presence and providence to one place) divine grace appears diffused over several Nations, being watchful in guiding and moving men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is their reason why such an appropriation of special graces and blessings (upon special reasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general favour, or to withdraw his ordinary graces from others. God surely (*who is*, πλούσιος ἐν ἐλέει, *rich in mercy*; yea, hath ὑπερβάλλοντα πλοῦτον χάριτος, (an *excessive riches of grace*,) is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others; his grace is not like the Sea, which if it overflow upon one shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep in one place, must become shallower in another. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitned?* it is a question in * *Micha*; and, *Is my hand shortned at all, that it cannot redeem?* is another question in *Esay*: *No*; *The Lord's hand is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear*; at any time, in

Eph. 4. 30. 1 Cor. 12. 7. Phil. 2. 13.

Eph. 2. 8. Gal. 5. 22. Luke 24. 45. Matt. 16. 17. John 16, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 3.

Ex quo perspicuum fit naturâ omnibus ineſſe Dei notitiam, nec quenquam ſine Chriſto naſci, & non habere ſemina in ſe ſapientiæ, juſtitiæ, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi abſque fide, & Evangelio Chriſti vel ſapienter faciunt aliqua vel ſanctè, &c. Hieron *in* Galat. 1.

Eph. 2. 4. 2. 7.

Secundum Scripturam credimus & piissimè confitemur, quod nunquam universitati hominum divinæ providentiæ cura defuerit. Quem licèt exceptum ſibi populum ſpecialibus ad pietatem direxerit inſtitutis, nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis ſuæ dona ſubtraxit, &c. De Vocat. Gen. l. 5.

* Mic. 2. 7. Iſa. 50. 2. 59. 1.

in any place; he is no less able, no less ready than he ever was to afford help to his poor creatures, where-ever it is needful or opportune. As there was of old an *Abimilech* among the *Philistines*, whom God by special warning deterr'd from commission of sin; a divine *Melchisedeck* among the *Cananites*; a discreet and honest *Jetro* in *Madian*; a very religious and vertuous *Job* in *Arabia*; who by complying with God's grace did evidence the communication thereof in in several Nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certifie concerning the particular effects thereof. We may at least discern and shew very conspicuous footsteps of divine grace, working in part, and producing no despicable fruits of moral virtue, of justice and honesty, temperance and sobriety, benignity and bounty, courage and constancy in worthy enterprises, meekness, patience, modesty; prudence and discretion; yea, of piety and devotion in some manner) even among *Pagans*, which if we do not allow to have been in all respects so complete, as to instate the persons endewed with them, or practisers of them in God's favour, or to bring them to salvation; yet those qualities and actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good, and so conformable to God's law) we can hardly deny to have been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace; they at least themselves acknowledged so much; (for, *Nulla sine Deomens bona est*, *No mind is good without God*, said *Seneca*; and, θεᾶ μοίρᾳ φαίνεσθαι παραγιγνομένη ἡ ἀρετὴ, οἷς παραγίνεται, *Virtue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it*, said *Socrates*) and, ἀλλ' εἰσὶ φύσεις, ἀμφισβητήσιμοι ἐν μέσῳ τῷ ἄκρας ἀρετῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐσχάτην μοχθηρίαν καθωρμισμέναι, δεῖσθαι ξυναγωνίστου θεοῦ καὶ ξυλλήπτορος καὶ ὅπῃ τι διάτορα τὰ κρούσματα ῥοπῆς καὶ χειραγωγίας. *The best-natured souls being constituted in the middle between the highest virtue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side*; saith *Max. Tyr.* XXII. St. *Austin* himself, who seems the least favourable in his judgment concerning their actions and state, who calls their virtues but images and shadows of virtue (*non veras, sed verisimiles*) splendid sins; acknowledges those virtuous dispositions and deeds to be the gifts of God, to be laudable, to procure some reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild treatment from divine justice; which things considered, such persons do at least by virtue of grace imparted to them obtain some part of salvation, or an imperfect kind of salvation, which they owe to our Lord, and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their *Saviour*.

Gen. 20. 3. 26. 8. Exod. 18. Καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐδικαίου πολλὰ καὶ ἡ φιλοσοφία τὰς Ἕλληνας. Clem. Alex. *Mortalem vitam honestare possunt, æternam conferre non possunt.* Prosper *in Collat. cap.* 26. (*Prodesse ad salutem* Aug. Prosper, Fulgent, *&c.*) *Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit.* Cic. *de Nat. deorum II. sub fin.* Sen. *Epist.* 73. —*Quæ secundum justitiæ regulam non solùm vituperare non possumus, sed etiam meritò rectèque laudamus.* Plat. Menon. *fine.* Aug. *desp. &. lit* 27. — *Dei donâ.* *Epist.* 130. Aug.

But although the torrent of natural pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign, or nominate any (among those, who have lived out of the pale) who certainly or probably have obtained salvation, yet doth it not follow thence that a sufficient grace was wanting to them. The most universal practice contrary to the intents of grace doth not evince a defect of graces. For we see that the same cause hath in a manner universally overborn and defeated other means and methods designed and dispensed by God for the instruction and emendation of Mankind.

Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minùs Fabricius quàm Catilina punitur, &c. — non veras virtutes habendo, sed à veris virtutibus non plurimùm deviando. Aug.

God's

Gen. 6. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 20. God's Spirit did long strive with the Inhabitants of the *old World*; yet no more than one Family was bettered, or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the *Israelites* in the Wilderness (as *Nehemiah* saith) Neh. 9. 20. yet no more than two persons did get into *Canaan*: That people afterward had afforded to them great advantages of knowledge and excitements to piety; (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more for them, in that regard, than he had done.) Yet, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God*, Isa. 5. 4. Psal. 14. was a complaint in the best times. The *Pagans* had the means of knowing God, as St. *Paul* affirmeth, Rom. 1. 21. yet generally they grew vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned; from which like cases and examples we may infer, that divine grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main design were produced. Neither, because we cannot alledge any evident instances of persons converted or saved by virtue of this grace (this *parcior occultiorque gratia, more sparing and secret grace*, as the good Writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it) are we forced to grant there were none such; but as in *Israel* when *Elias* said, the children of *Israel* have *forsaken God's Covenant, thrown down his Altars, and slain his Prophets with the sword*; 1 Kings 19. 14, 18. *and I, I only am left*; there were yet in *Israel*, living closely, *seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to Baal*: so among the generations of men, commonly overgrown with ignorance and impiety, there might (for all that we can know) be divers persons indiscernible to common view, who by complying with the influences of God's grace have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him; sincerely to love goodness, and hate wickedness; with an honest heart, to observe the laws of reason and righteousness; in such a manner and degree, which God might accept; so that the grace afforded might not only *sufficere omnibus in testimonium (suffice to convince all men)* but *quibusdam in remedium (to correct and cure some)* as that Writer *de Voc. Gent.* speaks. The consideration of God's nature and providence doth serve farther to persuade the truth of this assertion. If Psal. 145. 9. God be *rich in mercy* and bounty toward all his creatures, as such (and such he frequently asserts himself to be) if he be all-present, and all-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned spectator of what men do, in affairs of this consequence? that he should be present beholding men to run precipitantly into desperate mischiefs and miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them; struggling with their vices and follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance; assaulted by strong temptations, without yielding any support or succour; panting after rest and ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them? how can he see men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the *Psalmist* says of him: Psal. 25. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way*; to withhold his grace in such cases seemeth inconsistent with the kind and compassionate nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to mankind, by the *Mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus*. He also, that is so bountifull and indulgent toward all men in regard to their bodies and temporal estate; Psal. 103. 4. *who preserveth their life from destruction*, who protecteth them continually from danger and mischief; 145. 16. *who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing*, 107. 9. *who satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*. Who (as Acts 14. 17. St. *Paul* speaketh) *filleth mens hearts with food and gladness*, is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual welfare; and leave their souls utterly destitute of all sustenance or comfort; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal death and ruine; without offering

any

any means of redreſs or recovery? to conceive ſo of God, ſeemed very unreaſonable even to a *Pagan* Philoſopher: *Do you think* (ſaith *Max. Tyrius*) *that divination, poetry, and ſuch like things, are by divine inſpiration inſinuated into mens ſoals, and that vertue* (ſo much better, and ſo much rarer a thing) *is the work of moral art? you have forſooth a worthy conceit of God, who take him to be liberal in beſtowing mean things, and ſparing of better things. He that* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *giveth to all men life, breath, and all things*, will he withhold from any that beſt of gifts, and moſt worthy of him to give, that grace, whereby he may be able to ſerve him, to praiſe him, to glorify him, yea, to pleaſe and gratify him; to ſave a creature and ſubject of his; the thing wherein he ſo much delighteth? From hence alſo, that God hath vouchſafed general teſtimonies of his goodneſs, inducements to ſeek him, footſteps whereby he may be diſcovered and known, a light of reaſon and law of nature written upon mens hearts; attended with ſatisfactions, and checks of conſcience; ſo many diſpoſitions to knowledge and obedience (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) we may collect that he is not deficient in communicating interiour aſſiſtances, promoting the good uſe and improvement of thoſe talents; for that otherwiſe the beſtowing them is fruſtraneous and uſeleſs; being able to produce no good effect; yea, it rather is an argument of unkindneſs, being apt onely to produce an ill effect in thoſe, upon whom it is conferr'd; an aggravation of ſin, an accumulation of guilt and wrath upon them.

Max. Tyr. Diſſ. XXII.

Ἢ πολλοῦ ἄξιον νομίζεις τὸ θεῖον, περὶς μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καλῶς καὶ ἀφθόνως παρεσκευασμένον, περὶς δὲ τὰ κρείττω ἀπροσγον. Acts 17. 25.

Acts 14. 17. 17. 27. Rom. 1. 19. 2. 15.

If it be ſaid, that having ſuch grace is inconſiſtent with the want of an explicit knowledge of *Chriſt*, and of faith in him; why may not we ſay, that as probably (ſo St. *Chryſoſtome*, *vid. Mont. App. I.*) moſt good people before our Lord's coming received grace without any ſuch knowledge or faith; that as to Idiots and Infants our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied (in a manner unknowable by us) without ſo much as a capacity to know or believe any thing; that ſo we (to whom God's judgments are inſcrutable, and his ways uninveſtigable) know not how grace may be communicated unto, and *Chriſt*'s merits may avail for other ignorant perſons? in reſpect to whom we may apply that of Saint *John*; *The light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended it not.* However that ſuch perſons may have a grace capacifying them to arrive to that knowledge and faith, to which fuller communications of grace are promiſed; ſo that in reaſonable eſteem (as we ſhall preſently ſhew) the revelation of Evangelical Truth and the gift of faith may be ſuppoſed to be conferred upon all men---- ſo that we may apply to them that in the *Revelation*; *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and ſup with him*; *and he with me* (that is, Behold, I allure every man to the knowledge and embracing of Chriſtianity; if any man will open his mind and heart; ſo as to comply with my ſolicitations, I am ready to beſtow upon him the participation of Evangelical mercies and Bleſſings) and to ſuch perſons thoſe promiſes and rules in the *Goſpel*, may appertain; *He that asketh receiveth, He that ſeeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it ſhall be opened: The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is* ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς *(faithful in the uſe of the leaſt grace)* ſhall be rewarded. And, *to him that hath* (or that diligently keepeth and huſbandeth what he hath) *ſhall more be given.*

John. 1. 5. Apoc. 3. 20. Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε οὐκ ἂν εἴχετε ἁμαρτίαν. Joh. 9. 41. 15. 22. Luke 11. 10, 13. Luke 19. 17. 19. 26.

And how God ſometimes dealeth with ſuch perſons the eminent inſtances of St. *Paul* any *Cornelius* do ſhew. But concerning this point I ſpake ſomewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now; I ſhall only add

Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quæstione turbari, quam de omnium & non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus, & dum procaciter insistimus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c. Lib. 1. cap. 8.

that saying of the wise Writer *de Voc. Gen.* *A pious mind* (saith he) *should not, I think, be troubled at that question, which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not all men; if we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not excluded from those which are open and plain:* which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men; and it is consequent thence that he hath procured grace sufficiently capacifying all men to obtain salvation; we need not perplex the business, or obscure so apparent a truth by debating how that grace is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the dispensation thereof with other dispensations of providence.

Sermon XLI.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

5. JESUS is *the Saviour of all men*, as the conducter of all men into and through the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave Captains, who by their wisdom and valour have freed their Countrey from straits and oppressions. So were those *Judges* and *Princes*, who anciently delivered *Israel* from their enemies, commonly styled: *In the time of their trouble* (say the *Levites* in *Nehemiah*) *when they cried unto thee thou heardst them from heaven, and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them Saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy*; so are *Othniel* and *Ehud* particularly called; and *Moses* signally: *The same* (saith St. *Stephen* of him) *did God send to be* ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν, *a Commander and a Saviour* (or *Redeemer*) *to the children of Israel*; for that he by a worthy and happy conduct did free them from the *Egyptian* slavery. And thus was *Demetrius* by the *Athenians* (for his delivering them from the *Macedonian* subjection, and restoring their liberty to them) entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτὴρ, *a Benefactour and Saviour*. Thus with greatest reason is *Jesus* so called, as being ἀρχηγὸς τῆ σωτηρίας, *the Captain of Salvation* (so he is called by the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς (*the Captain of Life*, as St. *Peter* names him, the chief leader unto eternal life) ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως (*the Captain of our faith*; he that hath revealed

Neh. 9. 27.
Judg. 3. 9, 15.
Acts 7. 35.
Heb. 2. 10.
Acts 7. 35.
Heb. 12. 2.
Rom. 1. 16.

vealed that saving doctrine, which is the power of God to salvation) and these titles we have conjoyned by St. *Peter* in the *Acts*; *Him hath God exalted* ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins.* This he is to us several ways, by direction both instructive, and exemplary; by his protection and governance; by his mating and quelling the enemies of man's salvation; which things more specially and compleatly he hath perform'd in respect to faithful Christians, yet in a manner also he hath truly done them for and toward all men; as we shall distinctly consider. Acts 5. 31.

6. *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men* (we say) as having perfectly discovered and demonstrated the way and means of salvation; the gracious purposes of God concerning it; the duties required by God in order to it: the great helps and encouragements to seek it; the mighty determents from neglecting it; the whole will of God, and concernment of man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving truths he hath revealed unto all men; *mysteries* of truth, which *were hidden from ages and generations*, which no fancy of man could invent, no understanding could reach, no reason could by discussion clear (concerning the nature, providence, will and purpose of God; the nature, original and state of man; concerning the laws and rules of practice, the helps thereto, the reward thereof, whatever is important for us to know in order to happiness) he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with valid sorts of demonstration assert and confirm. The doing which (as having so much efficacy toward salvation, and being ordinarily so necessary thereto) is often called *saving*; as particularly by St. *James*; when he saith, *He that turns a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death.* And by St. *Paul*; *Take heed to thy word and doctrine, for so doing thou shalt save thy self, and thy hearers.* That our *Lord* hath thus (according to his design, and according to reasonable esteem) *saved all men*, we are authorized by the *holy Scriptures* to say; for he is there represented to be *the light of the world*; *the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into the world*; *the day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.* By him *the saving grace of God hath appeared unto all men.* By him (as *Esay* prophesied, and St. *John* the *Baptist* applied it) *all flesh did see the salvation of God.* Of him it was also foretold (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) *I have set thee for the light of the Nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.* *Coming he preached peace* τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγύς (*longè latèque*) *to them that were far, and them that were near*, that is, *to all men every where.* *While I am in the World*, said he, *I am the light of the world*; *shining, like the Sun*, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he farther virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messengers with a general commission and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them; *Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.* *Going into the world, preach the Gospel unto every creature* (or *to the whole creation*:) *So it ought to be, that in his name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all Nations.* And, such was the tenour of the *Apostolical* commission; *Thou shalt be witness for him toward all men*; said *Ananias to* St. *Paul.* Accordingly, in compliance with those orders, did the *Apostles*, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the Gospel, and consequently to be saved: *The times of ignorance*

Col. 1. 26. Rom 16. 25. Jam. 5. 20. 1 Tim. 4. 16. 1 Cor. 9. 22. Rom. 11. 14. 2 Tim. 3. 15. σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν. John 8. 12. 1. 9. Luke 1. 79. Tit. 2. 11. 3. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Luke 3. 6. Acts 13. 47. Eph. 2. 17. John 9. 5. Mat. 28. 19. 20. Mark 16. 15. Luke 24. 47. Acts 22. 15. 26. 17. Acts 17. 30.

hence (saith St. *Paul*) *God having winked at, doth now invite all men every-*
2 Cor. 5. 20. *where to repent*; And, *We are Embassadours for Christ, as though God did be-*
seech you by us, We pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God — we
pray you, you as members of that world, which God was in *Christ* reconci-
Colos. 1. 28. ling to himself; And, *We preach Christ — Warning every man, and teaching*
Acts 2. 40. *every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ*
Jesus (or *render every man a good Christian*.) Thus was the Gospel ac-
cording to our Saviour's intent and order preached (as St. *Paul* saith of
Col. 1. 23. it) ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν, *in the whole creation under heaven*;
thus did God shew, that he would *have all men to be saved, and to come*
1 Tim. 2. 4. *to the knowledge of the truth*; whence our *Lord* (in regard to the nature
and design of his performance in this kind) is the common Saviour, as the
John. 1. 18. common Master of truth, and Enlightner of the world, and Proclaimer
of God's will to mankind.

If now it be required or objected; why then is not the Gospel revea-
led unto men? how comes it to pass that no sound of this saving word,
no glimpse of this heavenly light doth arive to many Nations? how can
so general and large intention consist with so particular and sparing execu-
tion? what benefit can we imagin them capable to receive from this
performance of our Saviour, who still do sit in total ignorance of the
Gospel, in darkness, and the shadow of death? *How can they call upon him,*
Luke 1. 74. *in whom they believe not? and how can they believe in him, of whom they*
Mat. 4. 16. *have not heard?*
Rom. 10. 14.

To this suggestion I answer,

1. That God's intentions are not to be interpreted, nor his performan-
ces estimated by events, depending on the contingency of humane acti-
ons, but by his own declarations and precepts, together with the ordina-
ry provision of competent means, in their own nature sufficient to produce
those effects, which he declares himself to intend, or to perform. What
he reveals himself to design he doth really design it, what he says, that
he performeth, he (according to moral esteem, that is so far as to ground
duties of gratitude and honour, proceedings of justice and reward) doth
perform, although the thing upon other accompts be not effected.

Thus for instance, God would have all men to live together here in
peace, in order, in health, conveniently, comfortably, chearfully; accor-
ding to reason, with vertue and justice; and in the best state toward hap-
piness; for these purposes he hath endewed them with reasonable facul-
ties, he hath engraven on their minds a natural law, he hath furnished
them with all sorts of instruments and helps conducible to those ends, he
promoteth them by dispensations of providence, and (probably) by inter-
nal influences of grace; yet often all those means (by the perverseness
and stupidity of men) do prove ineffectual, so that wars, disorders, di-
seases, vices, iniquities and opressions, troubles and miseries do commo-
nly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his Church know-
ledge and piety, peace and charity, and good order should grow and flou-
rish; to which purposes he hath appointed Teachers to instruct, and Go-
vernours to watch over his People; he hath obliged each man to advise and
admonish his brother; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of pra-
ctice; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threat-
ned dreadfull punishments; he hath promised and doth afford requisite as-
sistances; being himself always present and ready to promote those ends
by his grace; yet notwithstanding by the voluntary neglect or abuse of
these means (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithfull; or the peo-
ple being indocil, sluggish, refractary; or both perverted with bad affe-
ctions)

ctions) often ignorance, errour and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the Church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and carefull providence toward men; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the author and donour of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner, which wisdom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are affected. So God having expresly declared that he would have all men to know and embrace the Gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth *Apostles* to disseminate it every-where, having obliged every man to confer his best endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent; or if by the carelesness and stupidity of those, who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by mens voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears (as the *Jews* did of old to the Prophetical instructions and admonitions) God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known; 'tis not reasonable to impute this defallance to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design mens instruction and salvation consequent thereon. Let me (for the illustration of this matter) put a case, or propound a similitude. Suppose a great Kingdom consisting of several Provinces should have revolted from their Sovereign; disclaiming his authority, neglecting and disobeying his laws; That the good Prince, out of his goodness and pity toward them (and upon other good considerations moving him thereto, suppose the mediation of his own Son) instead of prosecuting them with deserved vengeance, should grant a general pardon and amnesty, in these terms, or upon these conditions, that whoever of those rebels willingly should come in, acknowledge his fault, and promise future loyalty, or obedience to his laws declared to them, should be received into favour, have impunity, enjoy protection, and obtain rewards from him. Farther, for the effectuating this gracious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate Messengers, impowering and charging them to divulge the purport of this act of grace to all the People of that Kingdom. Admit now, that these Messengers should go forth, and seat themselves only in some Provinces of that Kingdom, proclaiming this universal pardon (universal as to the design, and as to the tenour thereof) only in those, neglecting others; or that, striving to Propogate it farther, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like cause the knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter Provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that pardon would be obstructed by such a carriage of the affair; but the tenour of that act would not thereby be altered; nor would the failure in execution (consequent upon the Ministers or the peoples misbehaviour) detract from the real amplitude of the Prince's intent; no more, than the willful incredulity, refusal, or non-compliance of some persons where the business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. 'Tis plain the Prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed favours and benefits do not reach all. The case so plainly sutes our purpose, that I need not make any application. The *holy Fathers* do by several like similitudes endeavour to illustrate this matter, and somewhat to assoil the difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the Sun, who shines indifferently to all the world, although there be some private corners and secret caves,

caves, to which his light doth not come; although some shut their windows or their eyes and exclude it; although some are blind and do not see it. That mystical Sun of righteousness (saith St. *Ambrose*) is risen to all, came to all, did suffer and rose again for all ---- but if any one doth not believe in *Christ*, he defrauds himself of the general benefit. As if one shutting the windows should exclude the beams of the Sun, the Sun is not therefore not risen to all. They compare our Lord to a Physician, who professes to relieve and cure all, that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure only those, who seek for remedy, and are willing to take the medicine; because all (saith * St. *Ambrose* again) do not desire cure, but most do shun it, lest the ulcer should smart by medicaments, therefore *volentes curat, non astringit invitos*; he cures only the willing, doth not compel those that are unwilling; they onely receive health, who desire medicine. Evangelical grace (say they) is like a fountain standing openly, to which all men have free access; at which all men may quench their thirst; if they will enquire after it, and go thereto. *The fountain of life* (saith *Arnobius*) *is open to all; nor is any man hindred or driven from the right of drinking it.* The covenant of grace is (say they) a door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter ---- *when an entrance* (saith St. *Chrysostome*) *being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully naught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto.*

'Ακούσατε ὦν οἱ μακρὰν ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη πᾶσι ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἐστὶ κοινὸν, ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· οὐδεὶς Κιμμέριος ἐν λόγῳ. Clem. Alex. *Protrep.*

Hear ye that are far: hear ye that are near: the word is not hid to any: 'tis a common light; it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian to the word.

Nunquid non medicus idcirco proponit in publico, ut omnes se ostendat velle salvare si velint. Ambr. *in* 1 Tim. 2.

* *Venit* —— *ut vulnera nostra curaret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiunt, nè medicamentis compungatur vis ulceris, idèo volentes, &c.* Ambr. *de* David. 3. 11.

Patet omnibus fons vitæ, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, ut pellitur. Arnob. *lib.* 2.

Ὅταν ἡ εἴσοδος πᾶσιν ἀνεῳγμένη, καὶ μηδενὸς τοῦ κωλύοντος ὄντος, ἐθελοκακήσαντες τινες ἔξω μένωσι, παρ' ἓνα ἕστηκεν, ἀλλ' ἢ παρὰ τὴν οἰκείαν πονηρίαν ἀπόλλυνται. Chrys. *in* 1 Joh. *homil.* 7.

And again he puts the question, *If Christ enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, how is it that so many remain unenlighten'd*, &c. To which he answers, that *if some, wilfully shutting the eyes of their minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it*, &c.

Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πῶς ἀφώτιστοι μεμενήκασι τοσοῦτοι· ἢ γὰρ οὐ πάντες ἐπέγνωσαν τὸν Χριστὸν τὸ σέβας· πῶς οὖν φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον; τόγε εἰς αὐτὸν ἦκον· οἱ δέ τινες ὀκνοῦντες τοὺς τῆς διανοίας ὀφθαλμοὺς μύσαντες οὐκ ἐθέλουσιν παραδέξασθαι τὸ φῶς τοῦτο τὰς ἀκτῖνα, οὐ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ φωτὸς φύσιν ἡ σκότωσις ἐκείνοις, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν κακοηθείαν τῶν ἑκουσίως ἀποστερούντων ἑαυτοὺς δωρεᾶς· ἡ μὲν γὰρ χάρις εἰς πάντας ἐκπέχυται—πάντως ὁμοίως παρεσκεύασται, καὶ μὴ τὴν ἴσης καλέσαι τε μῆς· οἱ δὲ μὴ θέλοντες ἀπολαῦσαι τῆς δωρεᾶς ταύτης, ἑαυτοῖς δίκαιοι ταύτην ἂν εἶεν λογίσασθαι τῷ πήρωσιν. Chrys. *in* Joh. 1. *homil.* 7.

Mysticus Sol ille justitiæ omnibus ortus est, omnibus venit, omnibus passus est & omnibus resurrexit —— si quis autem non credit in Christum, generali beneficio se fraudat, ut si quis clausis fenestris radios solis excludat, non idèo Sol non ortus est omnibus, &c. Amb. *in* Psal. 118. *Ser.* 8.

Si dies omnibus æqualiter nascitur, & si Sol super omnes pari & æquali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Christus Sol & dies verus, in Ecclesia sua lumen vitæ æternæ pari æqualitate largitur? Cypr. *Ep.* 76.

——ὡς ἀέρι πνεῦσιν, ὡς φωτὸς χύσιν, καὶ ὥρῶν ἀλλαγὰς, καὶ κτίσεως θέαν—— Naz. *Orat.* 40.

St. *Gregory Nazianzen* resembles the grace of Baptism (as to its community and freedom of use) to the breathing of the air, to the spreading of light, to the vicissitude of seasons, to the aspect of the creation; things most obvious and common to all.

If this answer do not fully satisfie, I adjoyn farther,

2. That God beside that ordinary provision is ready to interpose extraordinarily in disclosing his truth to them who are worthy of such favour and fit to receive it: and that God's general desire and design of revealing his truth to all men is very well consistent with his providential (not only

onely negative and permissive, but even positive and active) withholding the discovery thereof from some persons, yea some Nations; for that neither his wisdom, goodness, or justice might permit him, that he should impart that revelation to such persons whom he seeth altogether indisposed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abused the lesser graces and not improved or mis-improved the lesser talents afforded them; detained inferiour truths in unrighteousness, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*, have therefore justly been delivered up to a reprobate sense; who have so depraved their minds with wicked prejudices and affections, that the truth being offered to them, they would certainly either stupidly neglect it, or scornfully reject it, (or if admitting it in shew) would unworthily abuse it; so that from the imparting the means of knowing it, no glory to God, no benefit to man would accrue, but rather contempt of God, and prejudice to men would ensue upon it: there are some persons of that wicked and *Gigantick* disposition (contracted by evil practice) that should one offer to instruct them in truth, or move them to piety, would be ready to say with *Polyphemus* in *Homer*: Rom. 1. 18. 28. Esa. 30. 10.

Νήπιός ἐσσ' ὦ ξεῖνε, ἢ τηλόθεν ἀλαλήθεις, Odyss. 1.
Ὅς με θεοὺς κέλεαι ἢ δείδιμεν, ἢ ἀλέασθαι.

Friend, you are a fool, or a great stranger to me,
who adviseſt me to fear or regard the Deity.

Or (which is the same) with *Pharaoh*: *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, (or neither will I doe as you in God's name admonish me) who like that unhappy Prince, by no efficacy of arguments, no wonders of power are to be convinced of their folly, or converted from their wickedness: some, like those of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, whom not all the powerfull discourses spoken to them, all the mighty works done in them, sufficient to have brought *Tyre* and *Sidon* to repentance) can induce to mind or obey the truth: unto which sort of people (except upon some particular occasions, and for special reasons) it is not expedient that divine truth should be exposed. We may also observe how our Lord being asked by St. *Jude* a question like to ours; *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not to the world?* thus resolves it; *If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him*: implying the ordinary reason of God's making a difference in the discoveries of himself to be the previous disposition and behaviours of men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself. Exod. 5. 2. Prov. 1. 24. Luke 11. 33. Joh. 14. 22.

That God doth commonly observe this method (plainly suitable to divine justice, wisdom and goodness) to dispense the revelation of his truth according to mens disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruitfull and worthy use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, as Saint *John Baptist* spake; and to withhold it from those who are indisposed to admit it, or unfit to profit by it: we may from divers expres passages and notable instances (beside many probable intimations) of *Scripture* learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those whom our Saviour did chuse to call, were persons disposed easily upon his call to comply: to forsake their Fathers, and their nets; to leave their receipts of custome; to relinquish all (relations, occupations, estates) and to follow him; faithfull *Israelites*, without guile, like *Nathanael* (that is, as is probably conjectured St. *Bartholomew*) men honestly devout, and charitable, like *Zacheus*; that he chose to converse with publicans and sinners, men apt to be convinced of their errours, and touched with the sense of their sins; Matt. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 12. 7. Matt. 4. 18. Joh. 1. 24, 37. Matt. 19. 27. Luke 19. 8, 9. John 1. 47. Luke 19. 8, 9. Matt. 21. 31. Luke 5. 31.

apt

apt to see their need of mercy and grace, and therefore ready to entertain the overtures of them: that he blesses God for revealing his mysteries to babes (to innocent and well-meaning, imprejudicate and uncorrupted persons) such as if men were not, they could in no-wise enter into the
Matt. 18. 3. Kingdom of heaven, or become Christians; those *poor in spirit, of whom is*
19. 14. *the Kingdom of heaven*; those *foolish things* which God chuses as most fit
5. 3. objects of his mercy and grace; that he enjoyn'd his Disciples, in their
1 Cor. 1. 27. travels for the promulgation and propagation of the Gospel, to inquire concerning the worthiness or fitness of persons, and accordingly to make
Matt. 10. 11. more close applications to them: (*Into what City or Village ye enter, enquire who therein is worthy*; and entring in abide there) of this proceeding we have a notable instance in *Cornelius*, who for his honest piety (correspondent to the proportion of knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God, that in regard thereto he obtained from him the revelation of truth in a peculiar and extraordinary manner. And St. *Paul* was another most remarkable example thereof; who for the like reason was so wonderfully called, as himself intimates, describing himself to have been
Acts 22. 3. ζηλωτὴς θεῦ, *zealously affected toward God*; *according to the righteousness in the*
23. 1. *law, blameless*; one that had *continually* * *behaved himself with all good*
Phil. 3. 6. * Πεπολίτευμαι. *conscience toward God*; who even in the persecution of God's truth did proceed with an honest meaning and according to his conscience, for which
Acts 26 9. cause he saith, that God had mercy on him; foreseeing how willingly he
Gal. 1. 14. would embrace the truth, and how earnestly promote it: we may also ob-
Acts 26. serve, how in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, *the Holy Spirit* commonly directed the *Apostles* to such places, where a competent number of people were
Luke 9. 62. well disposed to receive the truth; who were εὐθετοι εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τ̃ θεῦ,
Acts 13. 48. *well-disposed to the Kingdom of heaven*, and consequently by God's fore-
17. 11. sight, (τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) *ordained to have the word of eternal*
28. 28. life (the τὸ σωτήριον θεῦ, as it is in a parallel place called) discovered to them; such people as the *Beræans*, men *ingenuous* and tractable; who consequently entertained the word, μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, with all promptitude and alacrity, To such persons God sometimes by extraordinary re-
Acts 18. 9. velation directed the *Apostles* to preach; as to the *Corinthians*, in respect to whom, the Lord spake to St. *Paul* in a vision, saying, *Fear not, but speak and be not silent, for I am with thee, because*---- πολὺς ἔστι μοι λαὸς, *there is for me much people in this City*; *much people* whom I see disposed to comply with my truth. So in behalf of the *Macedonians*, ἀνήρ τις Μακεδών,
Acts 16. 10. *a certain man of Macedonia* was in a vision seen to St. *Paul*, *exhorting him and saying*, *Passing into Macedonia help us*: thus on that hand doth God take special care that his truth be manifested to such, as are fitly qualified to embrace it and use it well: thus is God ready to make good that answer of *Pothinus* (Bishop of *Lions*, and immediate successour to St. *Ire-*
Euseb. V. 1. *næus*) to the *Prefect*, who asking him *who was the Christians God*, was answered, ἐὰν ἦς ἄξιος γνώσῃ, *If thou be worthy, thou shalt know*; thus (as the *Wise-man* divinely saith) the divine wisdom, ἀξίους αὐτῆς περιέρχεται ζητῶν,
Sap. 6. 16. *Goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her*; *sheweth her self favourable unto them in their ways, and meeteth them in every thought.*

And on the other hand, that God with-holds the special discoveries of his truth, upon account of mens indispositions and demerits, may likewise very plainly appear. We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself, what he ordered to his Disciples; *Not to give that which is holy to*
Matt. 7. 6. *dogs*, nor to cast their pearls before swine (not to expose the holy and pretious truth to very lewd and fierce People, who would snarl at it and trample upon it) we may allow God in his dispensation of his truth and

grace

grace to do, what ye bids the Apostles to do: before he enters into any house, or applies himself to any person, to * examine whether the house or person be worthy; that is willing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to decline them. Our Lord we see did leave even his own Country, seeing men there were not disposed to use him with due honour and ragard; seeing they were possessed with vain prejudices, apt to obstruct the efficacy of his divine instructions nnd miraculous performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine providence) to produce any considerable effect towards their conversion. *He could not* (it is said) *do many miracles there, because of their unbelief*; he could not, that is (according to the most just and wise rules he did observe, he would not do them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt to look upon those works as the effects of divine power and goodness, performed for their benefit (for inducing them to faith and repentance) but rather that the doing them would expose God's mercy to contempt or reproach, at least to neglect or disregard. Hence our *Saviour* declined conversing with persons indisposed to (those ψυχικοὶ, who cannot δέχεσθαι τὰ τῦ πνεύματος) receive benefit by his instruction and example; to grow wiser or better by his conversation; as the *Pharisees* and *Scribes*; men prepossessed with corrupt opinions and vitious affections, obstructive to the belief of his doctrine, and observance of his laws; and worldly persons; proud and self-conceited, crafy and deceitful, covetous, ambitious and worldly men, incorrigibly tinctured with that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *carnal wisdom and affection*; which *is enmity to God*; *so that it is not subject to the Law of God, nor can be*; inextricably engaged in the friendship of the World, which is enmity to God: To such men the Gospel would certainly be a scandal or a folly: they would never be able to relish or digest the doctrine of purity, self-denial, patience, and the like doctrines opposite to carnal sense and conceit which it teacheth. From such wise and prudent men (conceited of their little wisdoms, and doting upon their own fancies) God did conceal those heavenly mysteries; which they would have despised and derided: Those *many wise according to the flesh, many powerful; many noble*, God did not chuse to call into his Church: accordingly we may observe in the history of the Apostles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the Apostles passing through some places, it discerning how unsuccessful (at those seasons in those circumstances, according to those dispositions of men) their preaching would be: *Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindred by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia*; *coming to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.* Moreover there is plainly the like reason, why God should with-hold his saving truth from some people, as why he should withdraw it from others; when it is abused or proves fruitless: but of such withdrawing we have many plain instances, attended with the declaration of the reasons of them, *Our Lord* propheſied thus concerning the *Jews*; *I say unto you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation doing the fruits thereof*; they when our Saviour would have gathered them under his wings wilfully refusing. *Our Lord* charged his Disciples, when by any they were repulsed or neglected in their preaching, to leave those persons and places *shaking off the dust from their feet*, in token of an utter (εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς) detestation and desertion of them: and accordingly we see them practising in their Acts; when they perceived men perversely contradictious, or desperately senseless and stupid, so that they clamoured against the Gospel, and thrust it from them, they abstained from farther

* Ἐξετάζετε. Mat. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Mat. 21. 31. Rom. 8. 7. James 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15. 1 Cor. 1. 23. Mat. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 26. James 2. 5. Acts 16. 6. Mat. 21. 43. Mat. 10. 14. Luke 9. 5. Acts 13. 52. Acts 18. 6.

dealing with them, turning their endeavours other-where, toward persons of a more docile and ingenuous temper; thence more susceptive of Faith and repentance: *To you* (say *Paul and Barnabas* to the contradicting and reproachful *Jews*) *it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken, but seeing you put it from you* (*or thrust it away from you*, ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτὸν) *and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles.* So when the Church of *Ephesus* was grown cold in charity, and deficient in good works, God threatens to remove her Candlestick; or to withdraw from her that light of truth, which shone with so little beneficial influence. It seems evident that God for the like reasons may withhold the discovery of his truth, or forbear to interpose his providence; so as to transmit light thither, where mens deeds are so evil, that they will love darkness rather than light, where their eyes are so dim and weak, that the light will but offend and by the having it hurt them; where they by the having it declared to them will only incur farther mischief and misery; it would prove to them but ὀσμὴ θανάτου, a *deadly scent*, as the most comfortable perfumes are offensive sometimes and noxious to distempered bodies. Wherefore as where the light doth shine most clearly, it is mens voluntary pravity, that by it many are not effectually brought to salvation; so it is mens voluntary depraving and corrupting themselves, (misusing their natural light, choaking the seeds of natural ingenuity, thwarting God's secret whispers and motions, complying with the suggestions of the wicked one) so as to be rendred unmeet for the susception of God's heavenly truth and grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinarily with men, in sweet and reasonable methods, not in way of impetuous violence and coaction) from dispensing them: we may say of such in the words of the Prophet, *They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations: Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have with-holden good things from you.* Τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀγαθότητι πάντα ὁ κύριος ἐγγίζων· μακρύνομεν ἡμεῖς διὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα, *God doth by his goodness approach to all, but we set our selves at distance by sin*, saith St. *Basil*; and, ὅπου αὐτοπροαίρετος πονηρία, ἐκεῖ καὶ ἀποχὴ τῆς χάριτος, *where there is self-chosen, or affected wickedness, there is a with-holding of grace*, saith another *Father* (*apud* Cyrill. Hier.) The *Gospel, if it be hidden*, 'tis (as St. *Paul* says, (*hidden* ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in viris perditis, among lost men* (that is men desperately gone in wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable people) *in whom the God of this world* (that is as St. *Chrysostome* expounds it, not the Devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the glorious Gospel hath not shined to them* (πῶς οὖν ἐτύφλωσεν; how then did God blind them? saith St. *Crysostome*) οὐκ ἐνεργήσας εἰς τοῦτο, ἀπαγε· *not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that*; *fy on that*: ἀλλ' ἀφεὶς καὶ συγχωρήσας, *but by permission and concession*; for so the *Scripture* is wont to speak: Ἐπειδὴν γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀνάξιοι ἑαυτοὺς κατεσκεύασαν τοῦ ἰδεῖν τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτὸς λοιπὸν ἄφηκεν· ἀλλὰ τί ἔδει ποιῆσαι; πρὸς βίαν ἕλκειν, καὶ ἐκκαλύπτειν μὴ βουλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἂν κατεφρόνησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν εἶδον· *Seeing* (saith he) *they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone for what should he have done? should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? they would then have more despised it and not have seen it.* God is ever willing and ready to dispense his mercies and favours, but he is not wont to do it extraordinarily (or beside the course of his ordinary provision) but in a proper and fit season; (in that καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, *acceptable time and day of salvation*, when he seeth men capable of receiving them

Act. 13. 46. 28. 26.
Apoc. 2. 5.
Καὶ γὰρ τὰς ὕς (φασὶ) τὸ μύρον πίνειν Chrys.
John 3. 19.
2 Cor. 2 16.
Isa. 66. 3.
Jer. 5. 25.
Basil. *in* Ps. 33.
2 Cor. 4. 3.
Εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι αὐτοῖς· Chrys. *in* 2 Cor. 4. 4.
Luke 19. 44.
2 Cor. 6. 2.
Rom. 13. 11.

them) which season commonly dependeth upon man's will and choice, or the results of them. Καθόλου δὲ θεός οἶδεν τίς τε ἀξίως τῆς ἀγαθῶν, καὶ μὴ ὄθεν τὰ πεφυκότα ἑκάστοις διδόναι. Σωτὴρ γὰρ ὅτιν' ἐκεῖ τῆς μὲν τῆς δ' ὡς πρὸς τὸ ὅσον ὀφείλοντος ἕκαστος ἔχειν, τῷ ἑαυτῷ διένειμεν εὐεργεσίαν. Clem. *Strom.* VII p. 105. for (saith *Clemens Alex.* in his 7th of the *Stromata*, where he clearly and fully affirms our present doctrine) *Our Lord is not the Saviour of some, and not of others: but according as men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his beneficence to all.* St. *Augustine* himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: *Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus* (saith he) *quo quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione: & idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione.* But, *Quæst.* 68, & *Quæst.* 83. *Tom. IV. Part. I. Venit de occultissimis meritis, &c.* Ibid.

3. If all these considerations do not throughly satisfie us concerning the reason of God's proceedings in this case, we may consider that God's providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that (according to the *Psalmist*) as *God's mercy is in the Heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the clouds*; so *his righteousness is like the great mountains* (too high for our reason to climb) *and his judgments*, πολὺ ἄβυσσος, a great abyss, too deep for our feeble understanding to fathom; that his ways are more subtile and spiritual than to be traced by our dim and gross sight. So upon contemplation of a like case, although as it seems, hardly so obscure or unaccomptable as this, the cause concerning God's conditional rejection of that people, whom he in a special manner had so much and so long favoured) St. *Paul* himself doth profess. That therefore although we cannot fully resolve the difficulty, we notwithstanding without distrust should adhere to those positive and plain declarations, whereby God representeth himself seriously designing and earnestly desiring, *that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth*; *that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance*; not doubting but his declared mind, and his secret providence, although we cannot throughly discern or explain their consistency, do yet really and fully conspire. But no farther at this time. Psal. 36. 6. Rom. 11. 33. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Sermon XLII.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

8. AS our *Saviour* was such to all men by his doctrine, or the general discovery of all saving truth; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice; whereby upon the open stage of the world and in the common view of all that would attend unto him He did represent a living pattern of all goodness; by imitating which, we may certainly attain Salvation. He that will consider his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general instruction and imitation; calculated for all places and all sorts of people; suted to the complexions, to the capacities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men; so that every sort of men may from it draw profitable direction, may in it find a Coppy even of his particular behaviour: for He was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent in glory, and abounding in all wealth, yet was born in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to possess nothing; so teaching men of high rank to be sober, mild and humble, not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations and shews of worldly state; teaching those of mean degree to be patient, content and chearful in their station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound or measure; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary knowledge; of sharp wit, of deep subtilty; did not vent high, dark or intricate notions; had in his practice no reaches and windings of craft or policy; but was in his doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very open and clear; so that what he commonly said or did, not only Philosophers and Statesmen, but almost the simplest idiots might easily comprehend; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous wisdom; these not to be discouraged in their harmless ignorance, both having thence an equally sufficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete direction in the paths to happiness, being thereby σοφιζόμενοι εἰς σωτηρίαν, made wise and learned to salvation. He did not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself into the businesses of this World; yet did not withdraw himself from the company and conversation of men: he retired often from the crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly things; he put himself into it, that he might impart good to men, and benefit the World, declining no sort of so-

2 Tim. 3. 15.

ſociety; but indifferently converſing with all; diſputing with the Doctors and eating with the *Publicans*; whence thereby both men of contemplative and quiet diſpoſition or vocations, and men of buſie ſpirits, or of active lives may be guided reſpectively; thoſe not to be moroſe, ſupercilious, rigid, contemptuous toward other men; theſe not to be ſo poſſeſſed or intangled with the World, as not to reſerve ſome leiſure for the culture of their minds, not to employ ſome care upon the duty of piety and devotion; both may learn whether in private retirement or in publick converſation and employment eſpecially to regard the ſervice of God and the benefit of men; thus was the example of our accommodated for all men; eſpecially conducting them in the hardeſt and roughest parts of the way leading to bliſs, the acclivities and aſperities of duty; ſelf-denial, or neglect of worldly glory and fleſhly pleaſure, patience, humility, general charity; ſhewing us the poſſibility of performing ſuch duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through theſe difficult and dangerous paſſages (as a reſolute Chieftain of life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all oppoſite forces; all enemies, all temptations, all obſtacles; enduring painfully the moſt furious aſſaults of the World; boldly withſtanding and happily conquering the moſt malitious rage of Hell; ſo that victory and ſalvation we ſhall be certain of if we purſue his ſteps, and do not baſely (out of faintneſs or falſhood) deſert ſo good a leader; we ſhall not fail of the unfading Crown, if *with patience we run the race that is ſet before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfectour of our faith, Jeſus who for the joy propoſed unto him, endured the croſs, deſpiſed the ſhame, and hath ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Would it not raiſe and enflame any courage to ſee his Commander to adventure ſo boldly upon all hazards, to endure ſo willingly all hardſhips; whom would not the ſight of ſuch a * forerunner animate and quicken in his courſe; who by running in the ſtreight way of righteouſneſs, with alacrity and conſtancy, hath obtained himſelf a moſt glorious Crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the reward of thoſe, who follow him. Now as our Lord's doctrine, ſo did his example, in the nature and deſign therof, reſpect and appertain to all men, it being alſo like the light of Heaven, a common ſpectacle, a publick guide (*to guide our ſteps in the way of peace*) if it do not appear ſo, if it do not effectually direct all; it is by accident and beſide God's intention; 'tis by the fault of them who ſhould propound it, or of them who have not eyes fit, or worthy to behold it; briefly, what was ſaid concerning the univerſal revelation of Chriſtian doctrine may be applied to Chriſt's practice,

Αρχηγὸς ζωῆς. Acts 3. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 21. Heb. 12. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Ἀμαράντινον δόξης στέφανον. — στέφανος ζωῆς. Apoc. 2. 10. Jac. 1. 12.

* Πρόδρομος. Heb. 6. 20.

9. *Jeſus* is the *Saviour of all men* as having combated and vanquiſhed all the enemies of man's welfare and happineſs; *diſpoſſeſſing* them of all their pretences and uſurpations over man, diſarming them of all their power and force againſt him; enabling us to withſtand and overcome them: Man's ſalvation hath many adverſaries of different nature and kind; ſome directly oppugning it, ſome formally prejudicing it, ſome accidentally hindring it; ſome alluring, ſome forcing, ſome diſcouraging from it, or from the means conducing to it; the chief of them we may from the Scripture (with conſent of experience) reckon to be the *Devil* with all his envy and malice, his uſurpations, his deluſions and his temptations to ſin; the *World* with its ſnares and baits, its violences, perſecutions, and menaces; the fleſh or natural concupiſcence, with its bad inclinations and propenſities to evil, its luſts and pleaſures; *Sin*, with its guilt, and miſchievous conſequences; the *Law* with its rigorous exactions,

actions, hard measure and harsh boding; *Conscience* with its accusations and complaints, its terrours and anguishes; *Divine anger* with its effects *Death* and *Hell*: all those *our Lord* hath in several and suitable ways defeated; as to their malignity, contrariety, or enmity in respect of man's salvation; he hath (as *Zachary* prophesieth, in his *Benedictus*) *Saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: So that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might* (ἀφόβως) *safely and securely, without danger or fear serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*

—ὁ Χριστὸς ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας πείσεως πᾶσι καταλύσας τοῖς ἀρχουσι τοῦ κόσμου τούτου. Athan. *contra* Apoll. p. 628.

Luke 1. 71, 74.

The *Devil* (that *enemy*, that *adversary*, that *accuser*, that *slanderer*, that *murtherer*, that *greedy Lion*, that *crafty Serpent*; the *strong one*, the *mischievous one*, the *destroyer*) who usurped an authority and exercised a domination over mankind, as *the Prince of this world*; who made prise of them, *captivated them at his pleasure*; who detained them under the power (or authority) of darkness and wickedness; who had the power of death; him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated (καταργήσαν, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any farther pretence of empire or power over us) him he hath dejected from Heaven (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from Heaven*) him *he hath cast out: Now is the Judgment of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out*; all *his works he hath dissolved*; *For this cause* (saith St. *John*) *the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil.* He combated *this strong one* (this mighty and dreadful foe of ours) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him (taking away πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ, *the whole armour* in which he trusted) and *spoiled him* (τὰ σκεύη διήρπασε, *rifled all his baggage*, bare away all his instruments of mischief) and plundered all his house; leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to do us mischief; (as is intimated in the 12th of St. *Matthew*, and 11th of St. *Luke*) yea *he triumphed over* all those infernal principalities and powers, and exposed them (as St. *Paul* saith:) he imparted to his Disciples ability to *trample upon all his power*, by him all his followers are so fortified as *to conquer the wicked one* (as St. *John* says) he affordeth light to discover *all his wiles, and snares*; strength and courage *to withstand all his assaults, to repel all his fiery darts, to put him to flight.*

Matt. 12. 28. Luke 11. 19. 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Dragon*, Apoc. 12. 3. &c. Acts 10. 38. 1 John 2. 14. Apoc. 12. 9. John 12. 31. 16. 11. 14. 30. Ephes. 2. 2. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Colos. 1. 13. Acts 26. 18. Acts 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

Heb. 2. 14.

Luke 10. 18. John 12. 31. 16. 11.

1 John 3. 8.

Mat. 12. 29. Luke 11. 21.

Colos. 2. 15.

ἐδειγμάτισεν, Luke 10. 19. 1 John 2. 14. Eph. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Eph. 6. 16. 1 Pet. 5. 9. Eph. 4. 27. Jam. 4. 7.

The *World* also (that is, the wicked principles, the bad customs, the naughty conversation and example which commonly prevail here among men; alluring to evil and deterring from good; the cares also, the riches, the pleasures, the glories of the world, which possess or distract the minds, satiate and cloy the desires, employ all the affections and endeavours; take up the time of men; all in the world which fasteneth our hearts to earth, and to those low transitory things; or which sink them down toward hell; and which detain them from soaring toward heaven) is an enemy; an irreconcileable enemy to our salvation; the friendship thereof being inconsistent with a friendship in us toward the God of our salvation; or in him toward us: for *the friendship of the world is enmity with God*; and, *If any man love the world, the friendship of the father is not in him.* And this enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and enabled us to overcome. *Being of courage* (saith he) *I have overcome the world*; *he*, by a constant self-denial and temperance, defeated the bewitching pleasures, and flattering glories of it; *he*, by an immovable patience,

Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15.

John 16. 33.

patience, baffled the terrible frowns, and outrageous violences of it; *he*, by a resolute and invincible maintenance of truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the errours and oppositions thereof; *he*, by a general and intense charity, surmounted the provocations, envies and enmities thereof: *he* did it himself for us, and *he* also enabled us to do it; furnishing us with sufficient strength, and fit weapons whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repel its force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by faith in him) *is born of God doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith: Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* In all these things (that is in whatever concerns the world and its enmity; *tribulation*, or *distress*, or *persecution*, or *famine*, or *nakedness*, or *peril*, or *sword*) *we are* (saith St. *Paul*) *more than conquerors through him that loves us; thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ*: Our Lord hath procured for us hopes that will raise our minds and affections above the world; objects employing our care and endeavour far beyond it; satisfactions that will chear our hearts, and satiate our desires without it; comforts, that will support and sustain our spirits against all the terrours, all the assaults, all the evils thereof; by his means it is, that we have no reason either to love it; or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to contemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us.

1 John 5. 4. Rom. 8. 38. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Phil. 1. 28.

The *Flesh* also (that is, all that within us of bodily temper, or natural constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vitious excess in sensual enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate love of ourselves and of other creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is adversary thereto: which blindeth and darkneth our minds in the apprehension of our judgment concerning divine things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our wills in the choice and prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the affections and passions of our soul; which continually enticeth and seduceth us to sin) is also an enemy; a very powerful, very treacherous, very dangerous and very mischievous enemy to us and our welfare; rendring us enemies to God (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,*) being *another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and captivating us to the law of sin*; engendring and fostering those *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*; whose works and fruits are all sorts of intemperance, impurity, pride, envy, contentiousness; this capital enemy of ours *our Lord* did in his own person first subdue, rejecting all the suggestions and thwarting the impulses thereof; entirely submitting to and performing the will of God; even in willingly drinking that cup, which was so distastful, so grievous to natural will and fleshly desire. He so conquered the flesh in himself for us; he also conquers it in us, by the guidance and assistance of his grace enabling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (saith St. *Paul*) *hath freed me from the law of sin and death.* He infuses a light discussing those foggs which steam from carnal sense and appetite; so that we may clearly discern divine truths, the will of God, the way to happiness; he inserteth principles of spiritual life and strength counterpoising and overswaying corporeal and sensual propensions; so that we can restrain sensual desires, and compose irregular passions; and submit readily to God's will; and observe chearfully God's law; and freely comply with the dictates of the Spirit or of right reason; he so continually aideth, en-

Gal. 5. 24. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Matt. 26. 41. Gal. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 18, 19. Jam. 1. 14. Rom. 8. 7. Rom. 7. 23. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Gal. 5. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 3. Col. 3. 5. Luke 22. 42. Matt. 26. 39. John 17. 19. Heb. 2. 10. Rom 8. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 15. 1 John 2. 27. Eph. 5. 8. Rom. 12. 2. 1 John 5. 3. Phil. 2. 13. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

Heb. 13. 21. encourageth and upholds us, that we *can do all things through Christ that*
Gal. 5. 24. *strengtheneth* us; so that by his power and help *the flesh with its affections*
Coloss. 3. 5. 2. 11. *and lusts are crucified*; the *earthly members are mortified*; *the old man*
Eph. 4. 22. *(which was corrupted according to deceitful lusts) is put off*; *the body of*
Rom. 6. 6, 12. *sin is so destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin*; *sin doth not reign*
Rom. 8. 13. *in our mortal bodies, so that we* (must) *obey it in the lusts thereof*; *we are*
Heb. 12. 1. *renewed in the spirit of our minds*; and *do put on the new man, which is crea-*
Eph. 4. 23. 2. 10. *ted according to God in righteousness and true holiness.*
Coloss. 3. 10.

Our *Sins* also are very grievous enemies of ours, loading us with heavy guilt, stinging us with bitter remorse, and anxious fear, keeping us under miserable bondage, exposing us to extreme mischief and misery; them our Lord hath also routed and vanquished: in regard to this performance was the name *Jesus* assigned to him; as the *Angel* told *Joseph*: *She shall bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*: [*From their sins*; taking in all the causes and the consequences of them; from all those spiritual enemies, which draw us, or drive us into them; from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment; the terrour and anguish of conscience; the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them; the slavery under their dominion; the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them;] the guilt of sin he particularly freed us from; for *he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.* Christ died for sinners (for us then being sinners) that is, that he might deliver us from our sins, with all their causes, adjuncts and consequences. *He bare our sins on his own body on the tree*; *the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin: he is the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world*; *he was manifested to take away our sins*; *once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin* (εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, *to the abolition of sin*) *by the sacrifice of himself*; we are *justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*; *by his obedience many are constituted righteous* (or free from the guilt and imputation of sin) he *justifies the ungodly*; *covering their sins* and *not imputing them unto them.* So doth he wipe away the guilt of sin; and he voids the condemnation passed for them; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; *who is there that can condemn, since Christ hath died, or rather hath risen again?*

Heb. 12. 4. Πρὸς ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι.
Matt. 1. 21. Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου παθους πληρεστάτην ἀπέδωκε τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἵνα ὅλον ἀνθρωπον ἐκ ἁμαρτίας ἐν χάσμον πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἐλευθερώσῃ. Damasus *Epist. apud* Theod. 5. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

Rev. 1. 5.
1 Pet. 1. 19.
1 Pet. 2. 24. 3. 18.
1 John 1. 7. 2. 2. 3. 5. 4. 10.
Heb. 1. 3. 9. 26, 28.
Rom. 3. 24.
Rom. 5. 19.
Rom. 4. 5, 6, 7.
Rom. 8. 1.
Rom. 8. 34.

He hath also appeased God's wrath for sin, and removed the effects of it, (the punishment and vengeance due to sin and threatned for it.) So that *being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; *being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*: *Jesus* is the ὁ ῥυόμενος, *who delivers us from the wrath to come*; *being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath.*

Rom. 5. 10. 1.
1 Thes. 1. 10.
Rom. 5. 7.

The strength and dominion of sin he hath also broken; by the grace afforded us, whereby we are able to resist and avoid it; so that *sin henceforth shall not domineer over us, or reign in our mortal body*: *Being freed from sin we are enslaved to righteousness and made servants to God. The body of sin is destroyed so that we no longer serve sin*------ Whence consequently he hath subdued, utterly weakned, or quite destroyed (as to any force or mischievous influence upon us) those other adversaries, which depend upon sin, and by its power oppose and afflict us,

Rom. 6. 14.
Rom. 6. 12.
Rom. 6. 18, 22.
Rom. 6. 6.

Our *Conscience* is such an enemy accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the memory and sense of sin; suggesting to us the depth of our guilt and the danger of our state, terrifying us with the expectation of punish-

punishment and vengeance: but *our Lord* (by securing us of mercy and favour upon repentance and sincere obedience) hath silenced and stilled this *adversary*; hath *by his blood* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* says) *purged our conscience from dead works*; *hath delivered them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage*; so that thence we obtain a steady peace of mind, a joyful satisfaction in the service of God, a comfortable hope of future bliss: *peace*, *comfort* and *joy* are the adjuncts of that state he shall put us into, and the fruits of that Spirit he bestoweth on us. Heb. 9. 14. 15. Rom. 15. 13. Rom. 14. 17. Gal. 5. 22.

The *Law* also (in its rigour, as requiring exact obedience, and as denouncing vengeance to them who in any point violate it;) is, by reason of our weakness and inability so perfectly to observe it, an enemy to us; justifying no man, perfecting no man, causing, encreasing, aggravating, *quickening*, *declaring* sin; *yielding occasion to sin of killing us*, *working wrath*, *ministring death and condemnation*, *subjecting us to a curse* (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) but our Lord by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though not accurate) obedience, by purchasing and dispensing pardon for transgression thereof upon repentance, by conferring competent strength and ability to perform it in an acceptable degree, hath brought under this adversary; hath *redeemed us from the curse of the law*; hath *justifyed and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law* (without such punctual performances, as the Law exacts) we are *delivered from the law* (as to those effects of it; the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us) we cease to be under the law (in those respects) being under grace, being led by the Spirit (as St. *Paul* tells us.) The Law indeed is still our rule, our guide, our governour; we are obliged to follow and obey it; but it ceases to be a tyrant over us, a tormentor of us. Gal 2. 16. 3. 11. Heb. 7. 19. Rom. 10. 5. Rom. 8. 3. Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 3 12. 5. 3. Rom. 7. 13. Rom. 4 15. 3. 20. 5. 20. 7. 7, 8, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 56. 2 Cor. 3 7, 9. Gal. 3. 12. Gal. 3. 13. Rom 3. 21. 28. Rom. 4. 6. Rom. 7. 6, 4. Rom. 6. 14. Gal. 5. 18.

Death is also an enemy (*the last enemy*, saith St. *Paul*, *which shall be destroyed*, *is death*;) the enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us. 1 Cor. 15. 26. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 20 Acts 26. 23.

This enemy our Lord hath vanquished and destroyed: by his death and resurrection he opened the way to a happy immortality; *he abolished death*, *and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel*: *He* by his *death defeated him that had the power of death*; *and delivered them*, *who by fear of death were through their whole life subject to bondage*; he pulled out sin, which is the sting of death, and reversed the sentence of condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious. *The wages of sin* (that which we had deserved, and was by law due to us for it) *was death*; *but the gift of God is everlasting life*, *by Jesus Christ our Lord*. Col. 1. 18. Apoc. 1. 5. Acts 3. 15. Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb. 2. 14. Rom. 6. 23.

Lastly *Hell*, (that is *utter darkness*, extreme discomfort, intolerable and endless misery) the most dismal of all enemies, our Lord hath, by the virtue of his merits, and the power of his grace, put us into a capacity of avoiding; *he hath* (as St. *Paul* before tells us) *delivered us from the wrath to come*. *O Hell*, *where is thy victory? Death and Hell shall be cast into the lake of fire*. 1 Thess. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 55. Apoc. 20. 14.

Thus hath *our Lord* in our behalf vanquished and defeated every thing that is opposite, or prejudicial to our salvation and welfare. Many indeed of these things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more signal manner concern the faithful members of the *Christian Church*, and are directly applied to them, yet all of them in some sort, according to God's design, and in respect to a remote capacity, may be referred to *all men*. They are benefits which God intended for *all men*, and which *all men* (if they be not faulty and wanting to themselves) may obtain.

How they more especially appertain to the faithful we may shew afterward.

Application.

1. Hence ariseth great matter and cause of glorifying God; both from the thing it self, and its extent: for the magnitude of beneficence is to be estimated not only according to the degree of quality, but according to its amplitude of object; to redeem any doth signify goodness, to redeem many doth encrease it, to redeem all doth advance it to the highest pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the glory due to the benefactour.

Hence the *earth being full of the goodness of the Lord, the Lord being gratious unto all, and his mercy being over all his works*, all creatures partaking of God's bounty is so often insisted upon in those divine hymns, as a ground of praise to God.

Some do indeed speak of glorifying God for his discriminating grace; as if grace the narrower it were, the better it were: but is not selfishness and envy at the bottom of this? Is not this the disposition of those in the *Gospel*, who *murmured ---- is thine eye evil, because mine is good?*

It is dangerous to restrain God's benevolence and beneficence within bounds narrower than they really are; thereby diminishing his glory.

2. Hereby is discovered the general obligation of men to love God; to praise him, to serve him in sense of his goodness, in regard to his beneficence, out of gratitude toward him. If God hath been so kindly affected toward men, and so careful of their welfare, as for procuring and promoting their salvation to provide a *Savicur* for them, to design his own beloved son to that performance, in prosecution thereof depressing him into so low a state, exposing him to such inconveniences and indignities, such crosses and afflictions, how much are then all men obliged to love him, as their gratious friend and Benefactor; to praise and celebrate him for his favour and mercy, to render all blessings and thanks unto him? this certainly is the duty of all, if the redemption in God's design reach to all; otherwise in reality it lieth on few, in practice it could scarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their redemption, who are not obliged to him for the thing it self; they cannot heartily resent the kindness, who are not assured that it extends to them: And to such assurance (according to the doctrine of particular redemption) it is certain that very few men, especially of the best men, can arrive; it is a question whether any men arrive thereto.

Apoc. 5. 9.
Eph. 1. 6.
Col. 1. 12.

According to the sense of all men it is also no easie thing to know certainly, whether a man at present be in the state of grace: and he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the score of general redemption) be assured that he is redeemed; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common doctrine of *Christendom* for 15 hundred years together, that no man (without a special revelation) can in this life be assured of his perseverance, and consequently not of his salvation; and consequently not of his election or redemption, in case only they who are saved are in the design of God redeemed: no man therefore without that special revelation, can thank God heartily for his redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a secret reserved in God's breast.

It is yet a farther difficulty, supposing a man to have a good assurance of his present state, to be assured of his final perseverance in it: which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the said score) thank God for it.

The

The best men especially, who out of modesty and humility are apt to doubt of their present state; who studying their hearts and discovering many imperfections in themselves, who reflecting on their lives, and observing in them many defects, are apt to question whether they are qualified for God's favour, or fitted for the future accompt and enjoyment of heaven, who considering the treachery of their hearts, the feebleness of their reason, that unsteadiness of their resolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be rendred hence uncapable to render God thanks for their redemption: only the bold and blind Bayards (who usually out of self-conceit are so exceedingly confident of their election and salvation) will be able to praise God for it.

Hence the assurance of salvation hapning to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds; it being necessary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general sense of *Christendom*) groundless to any; few or none are capable to render God praise and thanks for it: so shall he lose in effect all thanks for the greatest benefit he did ever confer on mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous opinion, which checketh their gratitude, which stoppeth their mouths from praising God; which so depriveth God of his due praise. It is much more safe to praise God for the benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praise him, for that we have.

3. This doctrine doth afford great matter of comfort: if a man reflecting on his own heart and ways (observing in them many blemishes and defects) is apt to be discouraged, yet it will raise him to consider that he is not thereby excluded from a possibility of salvation, seeing he is assured of God's favourable inclination, and who hath expressed so much good-will and favour toward him in his redemption, seeing he is persuaded that he hath a Saviour so kindly and pitifully affected toward him; who wisheth him well; who is concerned in his salvation, that he might not be crossed or defeated in his designs, that he might not lose the effects of his endeavours, the price of his blood. But he that seeth himself in so doubtful a condition, as to his own qualifications, and withal hath no assurance that God was ever gratiously disposed toward him, cannot but thereby be much discouraged.

This doctrine therefore is safe and useful, it can do no man harm, it may do him great good by giving him hopes of being assisted and accepted of his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to discourage and deject men.

4. This doctrine is a great incitement to the performanc of duty; both as working upon mens ingenuity, and disposing them in gratitude to serve God, from the resentment of their obligation for so great a favour; and as assuring them of acceptance in case of endeavour to obey. How can he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such merciful design to save him? of his having done so much in order thereto?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him? how can any man apply himself chearfully to serve that master, whose favourable inclination toward him, whose readiness to accept his service he doubteth of.

The *Apostles* propound it as a ground of gratitude, and an obligation to the performance of duty, that they are redeemed by Christ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

Supposing Christ is not the redeemer of all but of those only, who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfulness and enforcements of duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians, and indeed only those who are sure of their salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my redeemer, supposeth my opinion, and is grounded upon the truth of his being really so: ------ I cannot heartily, confidently or comfortably do it, except I know it, and am assured thereof: which I cannot do except Christ died for all men, or that I am assured of my particular election.

So that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the greatest part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as they are enjoined to do.

5. It is a great aggravation of Infidelity, of Apostasie, of all disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the designs and undertakings of Christ, do reject the overtures of his grace, do abuse the goodness and mercy of their redeemer; it consequently deterreth from those things.

Luke 7. 30. *The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God toward them,* (God therefore designed their good.)

Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape, that neglect so great salvation?* a salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them; otherwise there would have been no danger in neglecting it, no fault in doing it.

Acts 13. 26, 46. It is said of the *Jews* at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, that *they did,* ἀπωθεῖσθε, *thrust away the Gospel* (*the word of salvation,* that was sent them) *judging themselves unworthy of eternal life:* God did think fit out of goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it.

2 Pet. 3. 9. Rom. 2. 23. *Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness?* how can any man despise that, which doth not concern him, which never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of confidence, that it extendeth to him?

John 5. 34. 38. *These things I speak that ye may be saved:* so *our Lord* saith to those ----*who did not believe in him.*

Mat. 23. 37. *How often have I willed,* &c.

2 Pet. 2. 1. *Denying the Lord that bought them.*

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer; or of using his mediation? whom will not such an experiment of goodness invite and encourage?

But the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly, and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediatour or no. Who must thus conceive and say to himself: perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will have any regard to my welfare. Perhaps *Christ* died with intention do do me good, perhaps he never did mean any such thing: perhaps those expressions of kindness sounding so generally do not include me, perhaps I am excluded, and only deluded by them. When a man cannot say to *Christ,* O my Saviour---O my Mediatour, *&c.* nor use his intercession with God for the procurement of faith, of grace, of any good thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of charity; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of *Christ*'s love and mercy, should endear men to one another; it rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and pretious in God's sight. It should make his salvation desireable to us.

Pray for all men, saith St. *Paul.*

The

The contrary opinion removeth this ground of charity; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us careful to promote the salvation of others, and fearful to hinder it by ill example, by ill doctrine, by any misbehaviour. So doth St. *Paul* argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him for whom Christ died?*

9. It is a piece of justice to acknowledge the right and interest of every man in his Saviour.

A wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross, to enclose a Common; to restrain that by forging distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men as the common works of nature do; as the air we breath in, as the Sun which shineth on us; the which are not given to any man particularly, but to all generally; not as a proper Inclosure, but as a Common---they are indeed mine, but not otherwise than as they do belong to all men.

A gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a blessing; there being no common gift, which by the refusal, neglect, or ill use of it may not prove a curse ---- *a savour of death.*

Sermon XLIII.

The Nativity of our Lord tidings of great Joy.

LUKE II. 10.

And the Angel said unto them, Fear not, for Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

Ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ.

THE proper business of a *Festival* is spiritual joy, conceived in our hearts, by reflexion on some notable blessing conferred on us; accompanied with a grateful sense and expression, answerable to the special bounty and mercy of God, in due proportion to the nature and degree of that blessing.

Such

1 Theſſ. 5. 16. Rom. 12. 12. Phil. 4. 4.

Such joy is a duty, or a part of religious devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him; for as God would have his ſervants perpetually content, well ſatisfied, and chearful in all ſtates, and upon all occurrences; ſo he doth eſpecially demand from us, that we ſhould entertain his favours with delight and complacence; it being proper, it being ſeemly, it being juſt ſo to do; for ſince joy is a natural reſult of our obtaining wha ever we do apprehend good, or eſteem and affect; the conception of it is a plain argument, that we do well underſtand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully embrace God's favours; as on the contrary a defect of it doth imply, that we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth, that we do not ſenſibly reliſh them, or accept them kindly. And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned ſo to rejoyce, then ſurely it is now; when the faireſt occaſion, and higheſt cauſe of joy, that ever was, is preſented to us; when certain news from heaven, and the beſt that ever came from thence, of the moſt admirable, the moſt glorious, the moſt beneficial event, that ever happened in the world, is in a manner ſutably rare conveyed to us; for *Behold*, ſaith the *Angel, I bring you tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people.*

Upon which *Words* (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with matter obſervable) we ſhall firſt make a brief deſcant or paraphraſe, ſupplying the room of a curious *Analyſis*; then we ſhall urge the main duty couched in them.

Ἰδού, *Behold:* this is a word denoting *admiration*, exciting *attention*, intimating aſſurance: *Behold* and *admire*; it is no mean, no ordinary matter, that I report, but a moſt remarkable, a very marvellous event: *Behold*, and *attend*; it is a buſineſs not to be paſſed over with ſmall regard, but moſt worthy your conſideration, of high moment, and concernment, to you. *Behold*, and *ſee*; 'tis no uncertain, no obſcure thing; but that whereof you may be fully aſſured, as if it were moſt evident to your ſenſe, and which by conſpicuous proofs ſhall be demonſtrated; in the mean while you have no ſlight authority for it; for

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, *I bring good tidings*; *I*, an *Angel*, a ſpecial Meſſenger of God purpoſely ſent on this errand, that by the ſtrangeneſs of my apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the weight of my teſtimony I may incline you to believe it; by the dignity of my nature I may declare the importance of it: *I*, a faithful ſervant of God, and a kind friend to men, very willing at his command to perform good offices to them, do bring a meſſage, well becoming an Angel's mouth, worth my deſcent from heaven, and putting on this viſible ſhape; for *I bring*

Εὐαγγ. χαρὰν μεγάλην, *good tydings of great joy*: I bring *tidings*, that may gratifie the curioſity of any man, the mind of man naturally being greedy of news; *good tidings*, thoſe are welcome to all men, and apt to yield more pleaſure, than any knowledge we had before: tidings *of joy*; ſuch as may not only miniſter a dry ſatisfaction to your reaſon, but ſenſibly touch your affections, by the comfortable nature, and beneficial tendency of them: tidings of *great joy*; as not touching any indifferent or petty buſineſs, but affairs of neareſt concernment, and higheſt conſequence to you: (ſuch indeed, as you ſhall underſtand, which do concern not the poor intereſts of this world, not the ſorry pleaſures of ſenſe, not any ſlender advantage of your preſent life, and temporal ſtate; but your ſpiritual welfare, your everlaſting condition, the future joy and happineſs of your ſouls) *tidings* indeed the moſt gladſome, that ever ſounded upon earth, that ever entred into mortal ear; theſe *I bring*

Ὑμῖν,

Τμῖν, *to you*: to you *ſhepherds*; perſons of mean condition, and ſimple capacity, leading this innocent and humble ſort of life, employed in your honeſt vocation, undergoing toilſome labour, and ſore hardſhip; witneſs the open field, witneſs the cold ſeaſon, witneſs the dark night in which I find you watching, and guarding your ſheep; to you, who could expect no very welcome tidings; who are little concerned in any great tranſactions; and can have ſmall ambition or hope of bettering your condition by any changes here; even to you (not in the firſt place to the mighty *Princes*, to the crafty *Stateſman*, to the ſage *Philoſophers*, or learned *Rabbies*, to the wealthy *Merchants*, or fine *Citizens*, who now are warm in their houſes, enjoying their eaſe and pleaſure; repoſing on their beds, or ſitting by their fires, or revelling at their banquets and ſports; but to you) poor, harmleſs, ſilly, induſtrious ſouls; who well may repreſent the greater and better part of mankind, in this ſurpriſing and abſolute free way, the gratious Lord of heaven by me his ſpecial miniſter doth vouchſafe to ſend from thence *tidings of great joy*; which ſhall be

Pauperibus atque vigilantibus, &c. Bern. de Nat. Serm. 5. Luke 2. 8.

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all people*; or rather to all *the people*; that is to God's ancient and peculiar people, in regard to which it is ſaid, *I was not ſent but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*; to *that* people I ſay eſpecially, primarily, and more immediately this joy did appertain; it by a cloſer relation to God, and ſpecial intereſt in his promiſes having plaineſt title thereto; it from anticipations of knowledge, faith and hope being more capable to admit ſuch an overture; it indeed being the repreſentative of all the ſpiritual *Iſrael*, or faithful ſeed of *Abraham*, for whom the benefits which theſe tidings import were deſigned; to it firſt indeed, but mediately and conſequentially to all people diſperſed on the face of the earth: The expreſſion ſeemeth adapted to the preſent conceits of that Nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable intentions to the community of men; but in effect it is to be underſtood extenſively in reference to all people: for the *Saviour*, the *Chriſt*, the *Lord*, of whom this good news did report, was not only to be the Redeemer, and Governour of that ſmall people, but of the World, of every Nation, of all mankind: Here indeed we have πᾶσι τῷ λαῷ, *to all the people*; but in the *nunc dimmittis* of old *Simeon*, we have πάντων τῶν λαῶν, *of all the peoples*; *Mine eyes* (ſaid he) *have ſeen thy ſalvation, which thou haſt prepared before the face of all the peoples*: As he was *the glory of his people Iſrael*; as in him *God did viſit and redeem that his people*; ſo he was *made a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for ſalvation to the uttermoſt ends of the earth*; He was *the expectation of Iſrael*; but he was likewiſe *the deſire of all nations*; He was deſtin'd *to rule in Sion*; but *the Heathen* alſo *were given for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion*; He was *the root of Jeſſe, which ſhould ſtand for an enſign of the people, to which the Gentiles ſhould ſeek*; He was that *Royal perſon*, of whom the *Pſalmiſt* did ſing, *Men ſhall be bleſſed in him, all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.*

Matt. 15. 24. 10. 6. Rom. 9. 4. Luke 24. 47. Acts 13. 46. Iſa. 2. 3. Zech. 9. 9. Rom. 9. 4. Luke 2. 31. Luke 2. 32. 1. 68. Acts 13. 47. Iſa. 49. 6. 42. 6. Luke 2. 38. Hag. 2. 7. Pſal. 2. 8. Mic. 5. 2. Iſa. 11. 10. Pſal. 72. 17.

He was to be born by Nation a *Jew*, but a man by nature; *the Son of man*, was a ſtyle which he commonly did own, and affect no leſs, than the *Son of Abraham*, or of *David*; he was *born* indeed *under the law*, but *of a woman*; and therefore brother to us all, as *partaker of the ſame fleſh and blood*; Hence was he endued with an humane compaſſion, and with a fraternal affection toward all men; hence was he diſpoſed to extend the benefit of his charitable and gratious performances unto them all.

Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 2. 14.

Judæa

Judæa therefore must not engross this angelical Gospel; it is of importance most universal and unlimited, reaching through all successions of time, and all extensions of place; filling all ages and regions of the world, with matter, and with obligation of joy: Hence even by *Moses* antiently (according to St. *Paul*'s interpretation) were all nations upon this account invited to a common joy; *Rejoyce*, said he, *O ye nations with his people.* Hence, in foresight of this event, the Holy *Psalmist* (as the *Fathers* expound him) did sing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoyce, let the multitude of Isles be glad thereof*: Hence *Sing, O thou barren, thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travel with child---The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desart shall rejoyce and blossom as the rose----- Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth,* said the *Evangelical Prophet* in regard to this dispensation; In fine, this *Angel* himself did interpret his own words, when in consort with the heavenly *Choir* he sang that *Antheme*, *Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-will toward men*; whence we may collect that a piece diffused over the earth, and a good-will extended toward all men were implied in these *tidings of great joy to all people.*

Rom. 15. 10. Deut. 32. 43.

Psal. 97. 1. 96. 1.

Τὸν περιέχοντα τὰ σύμπαντα ὑπερέστην περιλέγει

Totum ad Christum revocemus, si volumus iter rectæ intelligentiæ tenere. Aug. in Ps. 56. 7.

Isa. 54. 1. 35. 1. 42. 10.

Luke 2. 14.

We then are all concerned in these *tidings*, and we may look on them as by this heavenly *Evangelist* imparted to us; whence our duty must be to listen with reverent attention unto them, seriously to weigh the purport of them, diligently to contemplate the reasons of that great joy, which effectually should be produced in us by them, as their proper and due result; to further which practice, let us take some prospect of this *Gospel*, whereby it may appear pleasant, and apt to kindle a sprightly joy in our hearts. The matter of it, is the *Nativity* of our *ever blessed Lord*, and *Saviour Jesus Christ*; for, *To you*, saith our *Angel*, *is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*, an occurrence fraught with all the greatest causes of joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpressibly and unconceivably vast advantages thence springing to us.

It doth minister occasion of rejoycing for all the blessings which did flow from each of his salutary undertakings and performances; for all the mercies purchased by the merits of his obedience, and by the price of his blood; for all the graces issuing from his dispensation of the *Holy Spirit*; for all the benefits consequent on his illustrious resurrection, ascention and glorification; as being a good entrance to them, yea, a great progress in them, and a certain pledge of their full accomplishment; for all the work of our redemption was in a manner atchieved, when our Saviour did appear; his incarnation was the great step toward it; as being an act of the humblest obedience, and of the highest merit, that could any-wise be performed, for satisfying the justice of God, and winning his favour toward us: His *taking up life* may well seem more meritorious, than his *laying it down*, and the chief passion which he could ever undergo; His death was a passion, great as death could be; His life also was a continual passion, or exercise of huge patience; but his birth seemeth to be the greatest and strangest passion of all; involving the lowest submission, and the deepest suffering: What nobler sacrifice could there be, than God's offering himself up to mortality, to infirmity, to slavery? What obedience can be thought of comparable to that which he did express when he said, *Lo I come to do thy will, O God: I came down, not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me?* for him to descend from heaven, the

Heb. 10. 7. John 6. 38.

regi-

region of light and bliſs, into this gloomy and ſad world, for him in a manner to deveſt himſelf of celeſtial Majeſty, and to aſſume the form of a ſervant; for him to be encloſed in a womb, and to come out wailing thence, to ſuck at a breaſt for life, to be carried in arms, and laid in a manger; to enter on a ſtage of *Being* ſo very low and homely; for him, I ſay, *the Lord of Glory*, thus *to empty*, and *abaſe* himſelf, may not this reaſonably be deemed more, than after his becoming man to ſuſtain all the grievances incident to our nature and ſtate? whence *the very aſſumption of fleſh was* (ſaith St. *Athanaſius*) *the redemption of all mankind:* He was at leaſt thence engaged in the way of acting and ſuffering what-ever was needful for our recovery; and having gone ſo far, aſſuredly he never would flinch or recoil, but would go through with all; being come he would ſhew himſelf come to purpoſe, leaving no part unfiniſhed of his grand deſign.

Phil. 2. 7, 8.
Ἐκένωσεν, ἑαυτὸν ἐταπείνωσεν.

Ἡ περίληψις τ σαρκὸς ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν πάσης τ ἀνθρωπότητ. Ath. Or. 3. c. Arr. p. 385. vid. p. 618.

Λύχνον ἦλε τλὼ ἑαυτῷ σάρκα, &c. Greg. Naz. Or. 38.

Creatoris ad creaturam diſcenſio crudentium eſt ad æterna provectio. Leo M. de Nat. Serm. 5.

So that as they, who celebrate the birth of a Prince, do mean thereby to expreſs their joy for all the good which they do hopefully preſume to enjoy from his protection and conduct afterward in all his life; and as they who welcome the Sun-riſing, do imply their ſatisfaction in the conveniences of his light through the whole enſuing day; ſo may the *Nativity* of our *Lord* afford matter of rejoycing for all the train of mighty bleſſings which do ſucceed it. We may therefore now well conſider him born to inſtruct us by his excellent doctrine, and to guide us by his perfect example; born to merit God's mercy and favour toward us by an entire ſubmiſſion to God's pleaſure; in the whole conduct of his life, and in the final reſignation of it: born to renew and ſanctifie our nature, to ſupport and ſtrengthen us in obedience to God's commandments, to ſuccour us in temptations, to comfort us in diſtreſſes by his grace; born to rear himſelf from the grave for confirming our faith, and enſuring our hopes of ſalvation; born to aſcend up above all the heavens to God's right hand, there effectually to intercede for us, thence liberally to diſpenſe all heavenly bleſſings to us: Well may we now rejoyce, as ſeeing him come to diſcloſe the way of happineſs, to eſtabliſh the covenant of Grace, to void all the obſtructions, and ſubdue all the enemies to our welfare: well may we celebrate this *birth*, as by its virtue bleſſing the *Patriarchs*, enlightning the *Prophets*, inſpiring *Martyrs* with faith and courage, endewing all the *Saints*, that e'er have been, with grace, and crowning them with glory; ſo that in this *Day* we have the *Paſſion*, the *Paſch*, the *Aſcenſion*, the *Pentecoſt*, the *Memorials* of every *Saint* ſuggeſted to us; the joys of all our *Feſtivals* do conſpire or commence in this; which is the head and ſpring, which is the fruitful ſeed, which is the hopeful morning of them all.

Οὐκοῦν καὶ τὰ τῆ Παρθ. καλὰ πάντ περὶ τὸν Χριστὸν ἐυφημιῶν μέρ ἐστι. Greg. Nyſſ.

Πάντα ταῦτα τ παρόντος ἡμέρας χάριτός ἐστιν· αὕτη γὰρ ἦρξε πάντ ἐφεξῆς ἀγαθῶν. *All theſe things* (ſaith St. *Gregory Nyſſene*) *are the grace of this preſent day, for it began the goods, which did in order ſucceed.* Greg. Nyſſ. Tom. 2. p. 784.

But waving the numberleſs benefits ſo conſequent on the *Nativity*, we ſhall only touch ſome of thoſe which have a more formal and cloſe relation thereto.

I paſs over the contemplation of that ſweet harmony between the old, and the new World; in which, to our comfortable ſatisfaction, the ſweeteſt attributes of God (his goodneſs, his wiſdom, his fidelity and conſtancy) do illuſtrate themſelves, by completion of the ancient promiſes, prefigurations and predictions touching this event.

I forbear also to reflect on the happy alteration and amendment of the World, which our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it, with that which followed it; the consideration of which case is very pleasant, and productive of joy. *First* then,

Sapientia & benignitas Dei ac salutiferi operis mora capaciores nos suæ vocationis effecit, ut quod multis signis, multis vo ibus, multisque mysteriis per tot fuerat secula pronunciatum, in his diebus Evangelii non esset ambiguum, &c. Leo *P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

1. Let us consider, that the *Nativity* doth import the completion of many ancient promises, predictions and prefigurations concerning it; that whereas all former dispensations of favour and mercy were as preludes or preambles to this; the *Old Law* did aim to represent it in its mysterious pomps; the chief of providential occurrences did intimate it; the Prophets often in their mystical raptures did allude to it, and often in clear terms did express it; the gracious designs of God, and the longing expectations of mankind being so variously implied in regard thereto; now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in most clear, most effectual, most substantial accomplishment: Now is sprung up that *seed of the woman*, which according to the first *Gospel* preached to *Abraham*, should *bruise the serpent's head*; Now is the mystical *Isaac*, the miraculous *Son of promise* born; Now is that grant to *Abraham*, *In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed*, made good; Now is *Shiloh come*, of whom *Jacob* foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people shall be*; Now is that *Oracle* of *Moses* more than verified, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like to me, him shall ye hear*; Now *the star is come out of Jacob*, The vision whereof dazled *Balaam*, and stopped him from cursing that people, in which it should arise; Now is that oath discharged, to *David*, *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*; Now those illustrious predictions of *Isay*, *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse.---A Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be on his shoulders*; *There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob*, are fully accomplished: *Now the righteous branch* (of which *Jeremy* and *Zachary* spake) is sprouted forth; And *Ezekiel's One Shepherd*, *Daniel's Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven*; *Micah's Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old*; *Haggay's Desire of all Nations*; *Malachy's Angel of the Covenant*, and *Son of Righteousness* have all in truth appeared: Now is that glorious *King* and *Captain* arrived, whom the *holy Oracles* do so magnificently describe; whom *Moses* and *Joshua*, whom *David* and *Solomon* in so many pat circumstances did foreshadow; whom God would *set upon his holy hill of Sion*; *The scepter of whose Kingdom is a mighty scepter*; who should *raise the tabernacle of David that is fallen*; *before whom all Kings should fall down, and whom all nations should serve*; who *should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of whose Kingdom there shall be no end.*

Gen. 3. 15. 22. 18. Gal. 3. 8, 16. Gen. 49. 10. Deut. 18. 15. Acts 3. 22. 7. 37. Num. 24. 16. Psal. 132. 11. Luke 1. 33. Is. 11. 1. 7. 14 9. 6. 59. 20. Rom. 11. 26. Jer. 22. 5. 33. 15. Zech. 3. 8. 6. 12. Ezek. 34. 23. 37. 25. Dan. 7. 13. Mic. 5. 2. Matt. 2. 6. Hag. 2. 7. Mal. 3. 1. 4. 2. Ps. 2. 6. 45. 6. 72. 11. Acts 15. 16. Am. 9. 11. Luke 1. 13. Dan. 7. 13. Mic. 4 7.

Aug. *in* Ps 96. Now what can be more delightful, or satisfactory to our mind, than to reflect on this sweet harmony of things, this goodly correspondence between the old, and new World; wherein so pregnant evidences of God's chief attributes (of his goodness, of his wisdom, of his fidelity and constancy) all conspiring to our benefit do shine? Is it not pleasant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our welfare? what trains from the world's beginning, or ever since our unhappy fall he hath been laying to repair and restore us? how wisely he hath ordered all dispensations with a convenient reference and tendency to this masterpiece of grace? how steady he hath been in prosecuting his designs, and how faithful in accomplishing his promises concerning it?

Non itaque novo consilio Deus rebus humanis, nec serâ miseratione consuluit, sed à constitutione mundi unam eandémque omnibus causam salutis instituit. Leo *P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

If

If the *holy Patriarchs did see this day, and were glad*; if a glimpse thereof did cause their hearts * *to leap* with them; if its very dawn had on the Spirits of the *Prophets* so vigorous an influence; what comfort and complacence should we feel in this its real presence, and bright aspect on us? how sensibly should we be affected with this our happy advantage above them; the which our Lord himself then did teach us to estimate duly, when he said, *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear; for verily I say unto you, that many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* Jo. 8. 56. Mat. 13. 16, 17.

* Ἠγαλλιάσατο.
Magnam enim jocunditatem tunc carpebant ipsi Sancti Prophetæ, cum ea videbant in Spiritu, non jam impleta, sed adhuc futura —Aug. *in* Ps. 96.

2. Let us consider what alteration our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it to that which followed it. The old World then consisting of two parts, severed by a strong wall of partition, made up of difference in opinion, in practice, in affection, together with a strict prohibition to one of holding entercourse with the other. Eph. 2. 14. Acts 10. 28.

Of one, and that far the greater part, St. *Paul* hath given us these descriptions and characters; *They were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the world*; They were *by nature the children of wrath, and of disobedience*; They were *dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience*; They did *walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and being past feeling, did give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*; They *had their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind*; being *foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another*: Such was the case (the dismally wretched case) of the *Gentile* world; such were our forefathers (such after them of course, by fatal consequence, should we have been) They were in their minds blinded with gross ignorance, and deluded with foul errours; they were in their wills and affections corrupted with great disorder, perverseness, sensuality, malice; they did in their conversation practice all sorts of impiety, iniquity and impurity; their conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their worship answerably such (full of sottish, savage, beastly superstitions) their principles were vain, and their life conformably dissolute; in short, they lived under the domination and influence of wicked Spirits; who thence are styled *Lords* and *Princes of this world, of this air, of this secular darkness*: Even of the wisest among them (the number of whom, notwithstanding the clatter their writings made, was very small and inconsiderable) of those who by the conduct of natural light strove to disengage themselves from vulgar mistakes and miscarriages, the case was little better; for even their minds after all their studious disquisitions and debates) proved dark and giddy; full of ignorance, of errour, of doubt in regard to the main points of religion, and of morality; some of them flatly denying the existence, or (which in effect is the same) the providence of God; the natural distinction between good and evil, the spiritual nature and future subsistence of our souls, the dispensation of rewards and punishments after

Eph. 2. 3.
Eph. 2. 1.
Eph. 4. 17—
Tit. 3. 3. Col. 3. 7. (Eph. 5. 8. Col. 2. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Thess. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Gal. 4. 8. Rom. 1. 29.)
Eph. 6. 12. 2. 2. (John 12. 31. 14. 30. 16. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 16. Col. 1. 13. 2. 15. Acts 26. 18.)

after this life; others wavering in doubt, or having but faint perſuaſions about theſe matters; few or none having clear notions, or ſteady opinions about any ſuch things; whence their practice, in correſpondence to their rules, muſt needs have been very looſe, or very lame; ſo that well might our *Apoſtle* ſay of them, *They became vain in their reaſonings, and their fooliſh heart was darkned; profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they became fools; And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient.*

Διαλογισμοῖς. Rom. 1. 21—28.

As for the other part, or little parcel of men, the condition of that was alſo very low; if the reſt of the world did lie in dark night, they did live but in a dusky twilight; their Religion was much wrapt up in ſhadow and myſtery; they had but dilute *Idea's* of God's nature, and ſcant diſcoveries of his will; their law or rule of practice, in divers reſpects was defective and infirm; they were lock'd under the diſcipline of childiſh rudiments, ſuting their raw capacities, and under the bondage of ſlaviſh yokes befitting their ſtubborn diſpoſitions; which defailances in notion their practice commonly did out-ſtrip; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interiour, ſubſtantial and genuine righteouſneſs; as the old *Prophets* did often complain, and as our Lord, with his *Apoſtles*, did urge.

Col. 2. 17. Heb. 8. 5. 10. 1. Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 3. 21. Heb. 7. 18, 19.

Such was the ſtate of the World in its parts, and joyntly of the whole it may be ſaid, that it was *ſhut up under ſin* and guilt; under darkneſs and weakneſs, under death and corruption, under ſorrow and woe: that no full declaration of God's pleaſure, no clear overture of mercy, no expreſs grant of ſpiritual aid, no certain redemption from the filth, or the force of ſin, from the ſtroak of death, from due puniſhment hereafter; no encouragements ſutable to high devotion, or ſtrict virtue, were any-wiſe in a ſolemn way exhibited or diſpenſed before our *Lord's* appearance: ſo that well might all men be then repreſented as *Cimmerians, ſitting in darkneſs, in the region and ſhadow of death*; well may we ſuppoſe all ages foregoing to have teemed with hope, and deſire of this happy day; or that (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *the whole creation* (that is, all mankind) *groneth together, and travelleth together until now*; as labouring with pangs of implicit deſire, or under a painful ſenſe of needing a *Saviour*; well might *Eſay* thus proclaim his coming; *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee; for behold darkneſs ſhall cover the land, and groſs darkneſs the people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee, and the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightneſs of thy riſing*: for, Now *the Lord hath made known his ſalvation, his righteouſneſs hath he openly ſhewed in the ſight of the heathen; The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth do ſee the ſalvation of our God.*

Isa. 9. 1. Mat. 4. 15. Rom. 8. 22. Isa. 60. 1. Psal. 98. 2.

Now *we are all children of the light, and of the day*; all *do know God from the leaſt to the greateſt*; the rareſt, the deepeſt notions are grown common and obvious; every Child is inſtructed in the higheſt truths, every Peaſant is become a great Philoſopher, (beyond *Ariſtotle*, or *Plato*, or *Epictetus*) skilful of the beſt knowledge, able to direct his life in the beſt way, capable of obtaining the beſt good.

1 Theſſ. 5. 5. (2 Cor. 3. 18 4. 6.) Heb. 8. 11. Jer. 31. 33.

Now the Spirit of God (the ſpirit of direction, of ſuccour, of comfort ſpiritual) is poured upon all fleſh. *Now the grace of God, that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men*; fully inſtructing them in their duty, and ſtrongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them mercy, mightily encouraging them with hopes of moſt bleſſed rewards.

Acts 2. 17. Joel. 2. 16. Tit. 2. 11. Luke 24. 47.

Now *Jew* and *Gentile* are re-united and compacted in one body; walking in the ſame light, and under obligation to the ſame laws; ſharing in a com-

common redemption and inheritance; being inſeparably linked together with the bands of faith, of charity, of ſpiritual fraternity; thus *old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new*, in virtue and conſequence of our Lord's appearance: In contemplation of which ſo great, ſo general, ſo happy a change, how can we forbear to rejoyce? Eph. 3 6. 2. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Διὸ χαίρετε. Heb. 9. 10.

But farther, that we may yet more nearly touch the point:

3. Let us conſider that the Nativity of our Lord is a grand inſtance, a pregnant evidence, a *rich* earneſt of Almighty God's very great affection and benignity toward mankind: for, *In this* (ſaith St. *John*) *the love of God was manifeſted, that God ſent his only begotten ſon into the world*; and *Through the tender mercies of our God* (ſang old *Zachary*) *the day ſpring from on high did viſit us*: This indeed is the peculiar experiment, wherein that moſt divine attribute did ſhew and ſignalize it ſelf. The power of God doth brightly ſhine in the creation, the wiſdom of God may clearly be diſcerned in the government of things; but the incarnation of God is that work, is that diſpenſation of grace, wherein the divine goodneſs doth moſt conſpicuouſly diſplay it ſelf: How indeed poſſibly could God have demonſtrated a greater exceſs of kindneſs toward us, than by thus for our ſake and good ſending his deareſt Son out of his boſom into this ſordid and ſervile eſtate, ſubjecting him to all the infirmities of our frail nature, expoſing him to the worſt inconveniences of our low condition? what expreſſions can ſignifie, what compariſons can ſet out the ſtupendious vaſtneſs of this kindneſs? If we ſhould imagine, that a great prince ſhould put his only ſon (a ſon moſt lovely, and worthily moſt beloved) into rags, ſhould diſmiſs him from his Court, ſhould yield him up into the hardeſt ſlavery, merely to the intent, that he thereby might redeem from captivity the meaneſt and baſeſt of his ſubjects, how faint a reſemblance would this be of that immenſe goodneſs, of that incomparable mercy, which in this inſtance the King of all the World hath declared toward us his poor vaſſals, his indeed unworthy rebels?

1 John 4. 9. Joh. 3. 16, 17. Eph. 2. 4. Luke 1. 78.

Apparuerat antè potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat ſapientia in earum gubernatione, ſed benignitas miſericordiæ nunc maximè apparuit in humanitate. Bern. *de Nat. Serm.* 1.

Semper quidem diverſis modis, multiſque menſuris humano generi bonitas divina conſuluit, & plurima providentiæ ſuæ munera omnibus retrò ſeculis clementer impartiit; ſed in noviſſimis temporibus omnem abundantiam ſolitæ benignitatis exceſſit; quando in Chriſto ipſa ad peccatores miſericordia, ipſa ad errantes veritas, ipſa ad mortuos vita deſcendit, &c. P. Leo *M. de Nat. Serm.* 4.

(Pſal. 36. 6. 108. 4.)

And what greater reaſon of joy can there be, than ſuch an aſſurance of his love, on whoſe love all our good dependeth, in whoſe love all our felicity conſiſteth? what can be more delightful than to view the face of our Almighty Lord ſo graciouſly ſmiling upon us?

Should we not be extremely glad, ſhould we not be proud, if our earthly prince by any ſingular mark would expreſs himſelf kindly affected to us? how much more ſhould we reſent ſuch a teſtimony of God's favour; how worthily may our ſouls be tranſported with a ſenſe of ſuch affection?

4. We may conſider our Lord's nativity, as not only expreſſing ſimple good-will, but implying a perfect reconciliation, a firm peace, a ſteady friendſhip eſtabliſhed between God and us: or that it did not only proceed from love, but did alſo produce love to us. We did ſtand at a great diſtance, in eſtrangement, yea in enmity toward God; our firſt parents had by preſumptuous diſobedience revolted from him; and we inſiſting on the footſteps of their Apoſtaſie continued in *defiance of him*; *all men had ſinned, and fallen ſhort of the glory of God*; *There was not a righteous man upon earth, that did good, and ſinned not*; whence unavoidably the wrath of the moſt holy God was incenſed, the juſtice of the moſt righteous Lord was engaged againſt us; thence did iſſue a ſad doom, thence a juſt ſentence of capital puniſhment was denounced on us; no pretence of favour, no

Rom. 3. 24. 9. 23. Gal. 3. 22. Eccl. 7. 20.

Leo *de Nat. Serm.* 2.

over-

overture of peace, no hope of redreſs did then appear; we no-wiſe being able to expunge our guilt, to repair our offences, to recover out of that corruption in the mind and will, which did ſeal us up to ruine, indiſpoſing us either to find, or to entertain mercy; But our Lord's coming did appeaſe that anger, did mollify that juſtice, did ſuſpend that condemnation, did cloſe the breach, and *ſlay the enmity*; *God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) *ſending his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin, did condemn ſin in the fleſh*: for, how can God now avert his face from us, whom his only dear Son hath vouchſafed to make and own for his brethren? how can he look with an eye of diſpleaſure on that nature, wherewith that Son of his love ſtandeth clothed before him? how can he abide offended with our race, in which pure innocence and perfect obedience are found; he now appearing with us, and for us, in whom not the ſtricteſt juſtice, no the ſhrewdeſt malice can deſcry any fault or blemiſh; *in whom* therefore *God is* throughly *well-pleaſed*? Since we have *Emanuel, God with us*,---*God manifeſted in our fleſh. The Lord our righteouſneſs* partaker of our infirmity, interceſſour and advocate for his own fleſh and blood, ready to do and ſuffer whatever God pleaſeth to require on our behalf, how can God be againſt us? Shall God and man perſiſt at diſtance or diſaffection, who are ſo cloſely related, who are indeed ſo intimately united in one perſon? ſhall heaven and earth retain enmity, which have ſo kindly embraced, and kiſſed each other; ſince *truth hath ſprouted from the earth, and righteouſneſs hath looked down from heaven*? ſhall the war go on, when the great Mediatour and Umpire of peace is *come*; *preaching peace to them that are afar off and to them that are near*? Can death any longer reign over us, or our diſgrace and miſery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of ſalvation* doth appear for our relief?

Now then what can be more worthy of joy, than ſuch a bleſſed turn of affairs? how can we otherwiſe than with exceeding gladneſs ſolemnize ſuch a peace? a peace accorded with him, who in forces ſo infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his pleaſure can utterly quell us; who with the greateſt eaſe, with leſs than a word of his mouth, can daſh us to nothing, or hurl us down into an abyſs of remedileſs woe? how can we avoid being extremely ſatisfied at the recovery of his favour and friendſhip, which alone can be the foundation of our ſafety and welfare, which is the ſole fountain of all good, of all comfort, of all felicity?

5. Our Lord's nativity doth infer a great honour, and a high preferment to us: no-wiſe indeed could mankind be ſo dignified, or our nature ſo advanced as hereby: No wiſdom can deviſe a way beyond this, whereby God ſhould honour his moſt ſpecial favourites, or promote them to a nearneſs unto himſelf. For hence we become allied to God, in a moſt ſtrait affinity, his eternal Son being made our brother; hence as touching the blood-royal of heaven we do in dignity o'er-top all the creation; ſo that what the *Pſalmiſt* uttered concerning man, is verified in the moſt comprehenſive ſence, *Thou haſt crowned him with glory and honour, and haſt ſet him over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things in ſubjection under his feet*: for now the Son of Man, being alſo the Son of God,

Ἀδύναστον γάρ ἦν τῇ φύσει λοιπὸν ἄσῃ, ἢ ἐκείνως ἁμαρτησάσῃ, ἢ εἰς τὸ καταδίκην θανάτῳ γενομένῃ ἑαυτῇ ἀναλῦσαι εἰς ἐλευθερίαν. Ath. p. 638.

Ἀδύναστον ἑτέρως τὰ καθαρὸν ἢ ἀναμάρτητον ἐπ' ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως παρελθεῖν, εἰ μὴ θεὸς ὁ σαρκὶ πιστεύοιτο εἶναι, ὁ τὴν ἀναμάρτητον δικαιοσύνην εἰς κόσμον εἰσαγαγών, &c. Ath. de Incarn. Verbi.

Eph. 2. 15, 16,

Rom. 8. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

Τὸ τῆς Ἀδὰμ σύμπλωμα εἰς ἀσύγκριτον ἀνάσημα χειρὸς ἀνεσώσατο, ὃν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας ἀφθεὶς, ἢ κατακείνας τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Ath. p. 620.

Εἰ ἢ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτησάσῃ φύσει ἡ ἀναμαρτησία ὤφθη, πῶς καθικνεῖτο ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Id. p. 368.

(1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 7. 26.)
John. 14. 30. ——ἐν ἐμοὶ οὐκ ἔχει οὐδέν.
John 19. 6. ——οὐκ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.
Matt. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
Jer. 23. 6. 33. 16.

Pſal. 85. 11.

Iſa. 9. 6.
Acts 10. 36.
Eph. 2. 17.
1 Cor. 2. 8.

Eph. 3. 10, 17.

(Ἡνωμένῳ πάλιν καὶ πνεῦμα, ἡμῖν ἢ καὶ σάρκα. Ath p. 612.)

Pſal. 8. 5.
Heb. 2. 7.

Col. 2. 10.
Eph. 2. 22.

God, is *the Head of all principality and power*, is *the Lord of all things*, is the Sovereign Prince of all the world; is placed *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.* That is a peculiar honour, to which the higheſt Angels cannot pretend; for, *he took not the nature of Angels, but he took the ſeed of Abraham*; whence thoſe noble creatures are become in a manner inferiour to poor us; and according to juſt obligation, willingly to adore our nature; for, *when God brought his firſt begotten Son into the world, he ſaid, Let all the Angels of God worſhip him:* Is not indeed our fleſh become adorable, as the true *Shechinah*, as the everlaſting place of the ſupreme Majeſty, *wherein the fulneſs of the God-head dwelleth bodily*; as the moſt holy ſhrine of the divinity; as the Orb of *inacceſſible light*; as more than all this, if more could be expreſſed, or if we could expound that text, *the word was made fleſh, and dwelt in us?* May not our ſoul worthily claim the higheſt reſpect, all whoſe faculties (being endewed with unmeaſurable participations of the Holy Spirit) have been turned to a perfect harmony with the all-wiſe underſtanding, and the moſt pure will of God? yea, which hath been admitted into the neareſt conſortſhip, into the ſtricteſt union with the eternal Word; hath become an ingredient of him, who is *the wiſedom, and the power of God?* It was a great dignity that man ſhould be made according to the image of God, but it is a more ſublime glory, that God ſhould be made after the image of man, καὶ πάντα ὁμοιωθῆς, *being made like to us in all things*, bating only ſin, whch is no part of us, but an unnatural excreſcence, or a deflection from our nature: How could we be ſo raiſed up to God as by his thus ſtooping down to us? what can be imagined more honourable to us, than that God ſhould deem us worthy of ſuch condeſcenſion? this, this indeed is our exaltation, that God for us ſhould expreſs not only ſo vaſt charity, but ſo prodigious humility.

Acts 10. 36. Eph. 1 21. Phil. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Heb. 2. 17. Heb. 1. 6. Ἡ σὰρξ ἐθεοποιήθη. Ath. p. 597. Col. 2. 9. *Totum corpus implet tota divinitas.* Leo de Nat. Ser. 10. John 1. 14. 3. 34.

1 Cor. 1. 24.

Qui tam origini humanæ multum dederit, quod nos ad imaginem ſuam fecit, reparationi noſtræ longè amplius tribuit, cùm ſervili formæ ipſe ſe Dominus coaptavit. Leo *de Nat. Serm.* 4.

Heb. 2. 17.

Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda credentium, & mirabilia ejus confiteantur filii hominum, quoniam, in hoc præcipuè Dei opere humilitas noſtra cognoſcit, quanti tam ſuus conditor æſtimârit. Leo *Serm.* 4.

And is it not good matter of joy to be thus highly graced? when are men better pleaſed, than when they are preferred; then eſpecially, when from the meaneſt ſtate, *from the dunghil*, or *from the duſt*, they *are raiſed to be ſet among Princes*, and *made to inherit the throne of glory?* wherefore this being our caſe, that we ſons of earth, *children of corruption*, and *brethren of worms* (in *Job*'s ſtyle) we exiles of paradiſe, we heirs of death and miſery; we, that by our nature are the loweſt of all intelligent creatures, that by our merits were debaſed *beneath the Beaſts that periſh*, that we are aſſumed to ſuch relations, that we are ennobled to ſuch a pitch, that our nature hath mounted ſo high above all creatures, with what enlargement of heart ſhould we entertain a diſpenſation ſo wonderful; how welcome ſhould that day be, which doth introduce it?

Pſal. 113. 7, 8. 1 Sam. 2. 8. Job 17. 14. Pſal. 39. 12.

Hic infirmitatis noſtræ ſuſpiciens conditionem, propter quos ad inferna deſcendit eoſdem in cœleſtibus collocavit. Leo *de Nat.* 5.

6. Finally, if we ſurvey all principal cauſes of joy, and ſpecial exultation, we ſhall find them all concurring in this event.

Is a meſſenger of good news embraced with joy? Behold the great Evangeliſt is come, with his mouth full of news, moſt admirable, moſt acceptable: He, who doth acquaint us, that God is well pleaſed, that man is reſtored, that *the adverſary is caſt down*, that paradiſe is ſet open, and immortality retrieved; that truth and righteouſneſs, peace and joy, ſalvation and happineſs are deſcended, and come to dwell on earth; He of whom the Prophet told, *How beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of him,*

Apoc. 12. 10. John 14. 30. Luke 10. 18. Iſa. 52. 7.

Nah. 1. 15. Rom. 10. 15. *him that bringeth good tidings; that publiſheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation, that ſaith unto Sion, Thy God reigneth*; He who doth himſelf thus declare the drift and purport of his meſſage;

Iſa. 61. 1, 2. Luke 4. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the priſon to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn.*

Is the birth of a Prince by honeſt ſubjects to be commemorated with joyous feſtivity? Behold a Prince born to all the world; a Prince undertaking to rule mankind with ſweeteſt clemency, and exact juſtice; a Prince bringing with him all peace and proſperity; *in whoſe days Judah ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely*; who ſhall protect us in aſſured reſt and ſafety; ſhall ſecure us from all danger and miſchief; ſhall atchieve moſt gallant and glorious exploits in our behalf; ſhall vanquiſh all the enemies of our welfare, ſhall reſcue us from the worſt ſlaveries and miſchiefs; ſhall ſettle us in a moſt free and happy ſtate: He *who bringeth ſalvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us*, that *being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life:* Now therefore it is ſeaſonable to cry out, *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour to him.*

Iſa. 11. 2. Pſal. 45. & 72. Jer. 23. 6. Luke 1. 71, 74. Apoc. 19. 6. 11. 15.

Iſa. 9. 3. Apoc. 6. 2. Luke 11. 22. Col. 2. 15. (John 6. 33.) 1 John 3. 8. Rom. 16. 20.

May victory worthily beget exultation? See the invincible warriour doth iſſue forth into the field *conquering and to conquer:* He that ſhall baffle and rifle *the ſtrong one*, our formidable adverſary; that ſhall rout all the forces of hell, and *triumph over* the powers of darkneſs; that utterly ſhall defeat ſin, and ſlay death it ſelf; and ſhall ſubdue the world, and lay all things proſtrate at his feet; behold the *Captain of our ſalvation*; arrayed with glorious humility, and armed with a mighty patience; See, the great blow it ſtruck, at which the infernal powers do ſtagger; the Devil's pride and envy are abaſed; all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his preſence; they cannot ſtand, they break, they ſcatter, they flee before him.

Eph. 2. 17. (Iſa. 57. 2.) Acts 10. 36. Iſa. 9. 6.

Is a proclamation of peace, after rueful wars, to be ſolemnized with alacrity? Behold then everlaſting peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a ſound peace between each good man and himſelf are ſettled and publiſhed; the illuſtrious herald, the noble hoſtage of them is arrived; *the prince of peace* himſelf doth bring all peace unto us.

Is ſatisfaction of deſire, and hope very pleaſant? Behold the *deſire of all nations, the expectation of Iſrael*, he for whom the whole creation groaned, is come.

Is recovery of liberty delectable to poor ſlaves and captives? Behold, the *Redeemer is come out of Sion*; the pretious ranſome, ſufficient to purchaſe the freedom of many worlds, is laid down; unblemiſhed innocence, purity and perfection appearing in humane nature have procured a releaſment for us; have unlocked the priſon of ſin detaining us, have knocked off the ſhackles of guilt ſorely pinching and galling our conſciences; have wreſted us from the hands of thoſe proud Maſters, who claimed a right, who exerciſed a moſt tyrannous power over us; He is come, that *proclaimeth liberty to the captives, and opening of the priſon to them that are bound*; The time is come of which the Prophet foretold ----*The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs; and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away.*

(Gal. 3. 22.)

Nam ſuperbia hoſtis antiqui non immeritò ſibi in omnes homines jus tyrannicum vindicabat nec indebito dominatu premebat, quos à mandato Dei ſpontaneos in obſequium ſuæ voluntatis alleverat. Leo de Nativ. Serm. 2.

Luke 4. 18. Iſa. 35. 10.

Is

Is an overture of health acceptable to ſick and languiſhing perſons? Behold the great Phyſician, endewed with admirable skill, and furniſhed with infallible remedies, is come, to cure us of our maladies, and eaſe us of our pains; to bind up our wounds, and to pour in balm (the moſt ſovereign balm of his own blood) into them; to free us not only from all mortiferous diſeaſes, but from mortality it ſelf: He, who was *ſent to bind up and heal the broken-hearted*; He, who *himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes*; He, of whom the Prophet (in relation to corporal, and much more to ſpiritual infirmities) did foretel; ----- *God will come and ſave you; then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped; then ſhall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing*; He whoſe art no diſeaſe can reſiſt, who is able to cure our moſt deſperate, our moſt inveterate diſtempers; to heal the corruption and impotency of our nature, to avoid the ignorances and errours of our underſtanding, to correct the ſtupidity of our hearts, the perverſeneſs of our wills, the diſorder of our affections; to mitigate our anguiſh of conſcience, and cleanſe our ſores of guilt; by various efficacious medicines, by the wholeſome inſtructions of his doctrine, by the powerful inſpirations of his grace, by the refreſhing comforts of his Spirit, by the ſalutary virtue of his merits and ſufferings.

Luke 10. 33. Matt. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Iſa. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. Iſa. 53. 4. Mat. 8. 17. Iſa. 35. 5. Mat. 11. 5. Luke. 5. 17. (John 12. 40. Acts 10. 38. Luke 10 34.) (Ezek. 36. 26. Eph. 2. 10.)

Is mirth ſeaſonable on the day of marriage? Behold the greateſt wedding that ever was, is this day ſolemnized: heaven and earth are contracted; divinity is eſpouſed to humanity; a ſacred, an indiſſoluble knot is tyed between God and man, *The bridegroom is come forth out of his chamber (Verbum Dei de utero Virginali)* clad in his nuptial garment of fleſh, and ready to wed the Church his beloved Spouſe; *Let us therefore be glad and rejoyce; for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made her ſelf ready.*

In natali Domini quaſi in nuptiis ſpiritalibus ſponſæ ſuæ Eccleſiæ Chriſtus adjunctus eſt ——— tunc proceſſit ſponſus de thalamo ſuo, hoc eſt, Dei de utero virginali. Aug. *de temp. Serm.* 2.

Ἡ παρὰς ἐν ᾗ ὁ λόγος ἐνυμφεύσατο τὴν σάρκα Procl. *in* Eph. *p.* 1.

Joel 2. 16. Apoc. 19. 7.

Is the acceſs of a good friend to be received with chearful gratulation? Behold the deareſt and beſt friend of all mankind (moſt able, moſt willing, moſt ready to perform all good offices; to impart wholeſome advice, needful aid, ſweet converſe, and ſeaſonable conſolation) is arrived to viſit us, to ſojourn with us, to dwell with us for ever.

Is opportune relief grateful to perſons in a forlorn condition, pinched with extreme want, or plunged in any hard diſtreſs? Behold, a merciful, a bountiful, a mighty ſaviour and ſuccourer, undertaking *to comfort all that mourn*; inviting all ſuch to receive from him a plentiful ſupply for their needs, a comfortable eaſe in their preſſures, a happy riddance from their calamities; who *crieth* aloud, *If any one thirſteth, let him come to me and drink*; *Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.*

Ἐκραξε. John 7. 37. Iſa. 55. 1. 44. 3. Mat. 11. 28.

Is the Sun-riſing comfortable, after a tedious, darkſome and cold night? See, *the Sun of righteouſneſs is riſen with healing in his wings*, diſpenſing all about his pleaſant rays, and kindly influences: *The day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*; diffuſing an univerſal light upon the ſouls of men, whereby the night of ignorance is diſpelled, the ſpectres of errour are vaniſhed, the miſts of doubt are ſcattered; whereby we clearly and aſſuredly diſcern all truths of importance to us, and worthy of our knowledge; concerning the nature and attributes, the works and providence, the will and pleaſure of God; concerning our ſelves, our natural and original, our duty and intereſt, our future ſtate, and final doom: *Our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon us*; *the light of the world, the true light, enlightning every man*;

Mal. 4. 2. Luke 1. 78, 79. Iſa. 60. 1. John 8. 12. 9. 5. 1. 9.

Luke .6. .7. *man*; by whose lustre *all flesh may see the salvation of God*, and *which guideth our feet in the way of peace*, doth visibly shine forth upon us.

Never indeed did heaven with so fair and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as then it did, when this (ἀστὴρ παμφεγὴς καὶ ὀρθρινὸς,) *bright and morning-star* did spring up above our horizon, bringing this goodly day; and with it shedding life and chear among us.

Apoc. 22. 25.

From this auspicious day did commence the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were expelled from paradise, adjudged to death, and committed to hell; from thence we became re-instated in a condition of hope, and in a fair capacity of happiness; from thence is to be dated a return of joy into this Region of disconsolateness. In this nativity mankind was born, or did revive from manifold deaths; from a legal, a moral, a natural, an eternal death; from lying dead in irreparable guilt, and under an insuperable power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second* more ghastly *death*, of perpetual incurable anguish.

It is in effect therefore the birth-day of the world; the beginning of a new, better, eternal life to men, (offered to all, and effectually bestowed on those, who will embrace it) which we now do celebrate; all reason therefore we have to rejoyce most heartily, and most abundantly; As the goods thence accruing to us are in multitude innumerable, in quality inestimable, in duration immense; so in some correspondence should our Joy be very intense, very effuse, very stable; The contemplation of them should infuse somewhat of that *unspeakable joy*, whereof St. *Peter* speaketh; we should *be filled* (according to St. *Paul*'s expression) *with all joy and peace in believing* them; we should *hold fast* (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* adviseth) *the confidence and rejoycing of hope*, grounded on them, *firm to the end.*

It is the birth-day of the Church.

Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani, & natalis capitis natalis est corporis. P. Leo *de Nat. Serm. 6.*

Sicut cum Christo in passione crucifixi, in resurrectione resuscitati, in ascensione ad dextram Patris collocati ità cum ipso sumus in hac nativitate congeniti. Ibid.

Χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Phil. 1. 25. Heb. 3. 6. Rom. 12. 12.

Having so many, so great causes of joy, are we not very stupid, are we not strangely cross and perverse if we neglect so pleasant a duty?

To conclude, Of all the days that rise upon us this undoubtedly is the Queen, crowned by God's own hand with sovereign blessings; God hath avowed it to be the day of his peculiar making, and therefore of our special rejoycing; for thus of old the inspired *Psalmist* did teach and exhort us to keep *Christmas*, *This is the day, which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce and be glad therein.*

Psal. 118. 24. Mat. 21. 42. 21. 9. Acts 4. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 7.

SER-

Sermon XLIV.

The Sufferings of Chriſt foretold in the Old Teſtament.

ACTS III. 18.

But thoſe things, which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled.

MANY good arguments there are, different in kind, which conſpire to perſuade the truth of our religion; ſuch as are the intrinſick reaſonableneſs, excellency and perfection of its doctrine; the miraculous works performed in atteſtation thereto; the ſpecial favour of providence declared in the ſupport and propagation thereof; but upon no other ground do the Scriptures ſo much build its truth, and our obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact correſpondence and conformity thereof to all the ancient Scriptures, which did foreſhew or foretell its revelation and introduction into the World; to thoſe eſpecially which deſcribed the perſonal characters, circumſtances and performances of our Lord: to this *our Lord* in his diſcourſes, and diſputes with incredulous people, referred them; *Search the Scriptures*, (ſaid he) *becauſe in them ye expect to have eternal life* (that is, to find the true way of ſaving truth leading thereto) *and thoſe are they which teſtify of me*; by this he inſtructed and convicted his Diſciples; *beginning from Moſes and from all the Prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf*: and, *Thoſe* (ſaid he to them preſently before his departure) *are the words which I ſpake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things muſt be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moſes, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſalms concerning me*: This the *Apoſtles* in all their preaching (whereby they taught, proved and perſuaded, the Chriſtian doctrine) did chiefly inſiſt upon; *Moſes* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *truly ſaid unto the Fathers, yea, and all the Prophets from Samuel, and thoſe that follow after, as many as have ſpoken, have likewiſe foretold of theſe days*; and, *To him* (ſaith he again) *give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins*. And, of St. *Paul* 'tis ſaid, that *he mightily convinced the Jews ... ſhewing by the Scriptures, that Jeſus was the Chriſt*; and *... he expounded, and teſtified the Kingdom of God, perſuading them concerning Jeſus, both out of the law of Moſes, and out of the Prophets*; thus the chief *Apoſtles* and founders of our religion in their publick diſcourſes; and in their *Epiſtles*, they obſerve the ſame method; as particularly aſſerting Chriſtian doctrines and duties by the teſtimonies of prophetical Scriptures, ſo generally affirming our religion to be chiefly grounded on them; *of which Salvation* (ſaith St. *Peter*, concerning the ſalvation exhibited by the Go-

Joh. 5. 39.

Luke 24. 27. 22. 37. 1. 70. 24. 44.

Acts 3. 22, 24.

Acts 10. 43. 13. 27. 15. 15. 24. 14.

John 1. 45.

Acts 18. 28. 28. 23.

1 Pet. 1. 10.

Gospel) *the Prophets did inquire, and search diligently, who propheſied of the grace to come unto you*; and (in regard to the conviction of others) he ſeems to prefer the atteſtation of this kind before the ſpiritual revelation immediately made to the *Apoſtles*: for having ſpoken of it, he ſubjoyns,

2 Pet. 1. 19. καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον. *We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well, that ye do take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts.* And,

Rom. 16. 26, 26. 1. 2. St. *Paul* ſaith, that *the myſtery which was kept ſecret ſince the world began, was then made manifeſt, and by the prophetical ſcriptures, according to the commandment of the everlaſting God, made known to all nations, to the*

1 Tim. 3. 15. *obedience of faith*; and, *The Holy Writings* (he telleth *Timothy*) *were able to make him wiſe to the ſalvation*, which is, *by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt*; that is, they were able to ſhew, and perſuade to him the truth of Chriſtianity, which promiſeth ſalvation to all that heartily embrace it, and obſerve its Laws.

Such a ſtreſs was laid upon this probation by the *founders* of our Religion; and no wonder; for that is not only extremely forcible in it ſelf, but hath ſome particular uſes, and ſome peculiar advantages beyond others. The fore-knowledge of future contingent events (ſuch as were many of thoſe concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freeſt acts of humane will) as it is for the manner of attaining it moſt incomprehenſible to us, ſo it is moſt proper to God, and by all men ſo acknowledged; future contingencies being ſecrets, which no man, no angel, no creature can dive into, they being not diſcernible in their cauſes, which are indeterminate; nor in themſelves, who are finite.) The prediction therefore of ſuch events could not otherwiſe than proceed from his pleaſure; neither could he yield it in way of favour and approbation to that, which was not perfectly true, and good: This way therefore doth abſolutely confirm the truth and goodneſs of Chriſtian doctrine; it withal manifeſts the great worth and weight thereof, as implying the particular regard and care God had of it, deſigning it ſo anciently, laying trains of providence towards, and preparing ſuch evidences for the confirmation thereof; it together inſ to the bargain maintaineth the truth of the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, the ſincerity of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, and the vigilant care the divine goodneſs hath always had over the ſtate of Religion; and toward the welfare of mankind; never leaving it deſtitute of ſome immediate revelations from himſelf. It had a peculiar aptitude to convert the *Jews*, who were poſſeſſed with a full perſuaſion concerning the veracity and ſanctity of their ancient Prophets; and could not therefore doubt concerning the truth of that, which appeared conformable to that, which they had foretold ſhould be declared, and diſpenſed for their benefit. This probation alſo hath this advantage, that it ſingly taken doth ſuffice to convince; whereas others can hardly do it otherwiſe than in conjunction with one another, and eſpecially with its aid: for the goodneſs of the doctrine may be conteſted in ſome points, and however good it ſeem, it may be imputed to humane invention: ſtrange effects may be deemed producible by other cauſes beſide divine power; and they may be ſuffered to be done for other ends than for confirmation of truth; they are alſo commonly tranſcient, and thence moſt liable to doubt: Providence alſo is in many caſes ſo myſterious, and unſearchable, that the incredulous will never allow any inferences to be drawn from it: But the plain correſpondence of events to the ſtanding records of ancient Prophecies (obvious, and conſpicuous to every one, that will conſult and compare them) concerning a perſon to be ſent by God, who ſhould have ſuch circumſtances, and be ſo qualified; who ſhould in God's name

preach

preach ſuch doctrines, and perform ſuch works, is a proof which alone may aſſure any man, that ſuch a perſon doth come from God, and is in what he declareth or doth approve by him; no counterfeiting can here find place; no evaſion can be deviſed from the force of this proof.

This way therefore of diſcourſe our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles* (whoſe buſineſs it was by the moſt proper and effectual methods to ſubdue the reaſons of men to the *obedience of faith*, and entertainment of Chriſtian truth) did eſpecially uſe; as generally in reſpect to all things concerning our *Lord*, ſo particularly in regard to his paſſion: declaring it to happen punctually according to what had been foreſeen by God, and thence foreſhewed by his Prophets, rightly underſtood; *He took the twelve* (ſaith St. *Luke* of our *Lord*) *and ſaid unto them; behold, we go up to Jeruſalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man ſhall be accompliſhed; for he ſhall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and ſhall be mocked, and ſpitefully entreated, and ſpitted on; and they ſhall ſcourge him, and put him to death.* And again, after his reſurrection, he thus reproves his Diſciples; *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken; ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?* they did not then (partly being blinded with prejudice, partly not having uſed due induſtry, and perhaps not excelling in natural capacity, however not yet being ſufficiently enlightned by divine grace) apprehend, or diſcern, that according to the prophetical inſtructions our Lord was to ſuffer; but afterward, when he had *opened their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures*, they did ſee, and ſpecially urge this point: then Saint *Peter* declared, that *the Spirit of Chriſt, which was in the Prophets did teſtifie beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow*; then it was their manner to *reaſon* (as is ſaid of St. *Paul*) *out of the Scriptures, opening, and alledging, that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered; ſaying none other things, than thoſe, which the Prophets and Moſes did ſay ſhould come, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer; delivering firſt of all, that Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures*: this is that which in my Text St. *Peter* doth inſiſt upon, affirming about the paſſion of *Chriſt*, that it not only had been predicted by one, or more, but foreſhewed by an univerſal conſent of all the *Prophets*; to illuſtrate and confirm which aſſertion of his is the ſcope of our preſent diſcourſe; to perform which, after having briefly touched the ſtate of the matter in hand, we ſhall apply our ſelves.

Luke 18. 31. Luke 24. 25, 26. 46. Luke 24. 45. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Acts 17. 2. 26. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 3.

That the *Meſſias* was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearance of worldly ſplendour, or grandeur) that he was to converſe among men in a ſtate of external poverty, and meanneſs; that he was to cauſe offences, and find oppoſitions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulſed and rejected, to be hated and ſcorned, to be diſgracefully and harſhly treated, to be grievouſly perſecuted and afflicted; yea that at laſt he was to be proſecuted, condemned and executed as a malefactor, is a truth indeed, which the *Jews* (although they firmly believed, and earneſtly expected the coming a *Meſſias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a Point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits; yea, inconſiſtent with the nature and drift of their Religion, as they did underſtand it; for their Religion in its ſurface (deeper than which their groſs fancy could not penetrate) did repreſent earthly wealth, dignity and proſperity, as things moſt highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the ſole rewards of piety and obedience; did imply conſequently the poſſeſſion of them to be certain arguments of the divine good will, and regard: they could not therefore but eſteem poverty, affliction and diſgrace as curſes from heaven, and plain indications of God's diſ-

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favour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly are said to have conceited, that to be rich was a needful qualification for a Prophet (no less needful, than to be of a good complexion; of a good capacity, of a good conversation and life) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem, The Spirit of God doth not rest upon a poor man*; (that is, no special communications of grace, or of wisdom and goodness, are by God ever afforded to persons of a low and afflicted condition) being a *maxim* which they had framed, and which currently passed among them: that he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore should be so highly favoured by God, that he should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd; that could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had farther (in congruity to these prejudices, abated by that extreme self-love, and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the *Messias* was to come in a great visible state and power; to atchieve deeds of mighty prowess and renown; to bring the Nations of the world into subjection under him; and so to reign among them in huge majesty and prosperity; when *Jesus* therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications and performances, to the prophetical characters of the *Messias*) did first appear such as he did, with some pretences, or intimations rather, that he was the *Messias*, their stomach presently rose at it; they were exceedingly scandalized at him; they deemed him not only *a mad-man* (one possessed or distracted) and *an impostour*; but *a blasphemer*; for no less than blasphemy they took it to be for so mean and pitiful a wretch (as to their eyes he seemed) to assume unto himself so high a dignity, and so near a relation unto God, as being the *Messias* did import: we even see the Disciples themselves of our Lord so deeply imbued with this national prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the *Christ*, they could scarce with patience hear him foretelling what grievous things should befall him: St. *Peter* himself, upon that occasion, even just after he seriously confessed him to be the *Christ*, *did*, as it is expressed, *take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord*: yea, presently after that our Lord most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a Kingdom, and of being *Grandees* therein; yea farther, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time restore the Kingdom unto Israel*; meaning such an external visible Kingdom.

Matt. 16. 20.
Matt. 13. 57. 26. 65.
Matt. 16. 22. 17. 2. John 16. 12.
Matt. 20. 21, 25.
Acts 1. 6.

Hence of all things, notifying the *Messias*, this seemeth to be the only particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not see, and acknowledge; and this caused them to oversee all other glorious marks, how clearly soever shining in, and about the person of *Jesus*: this cloud hindred them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being duly affected with the wonderfulness of his works; from minding, or from crediting all the testimonies from heaven ministred unto him; this, as St. *Paul* telleth us, was the main *scandal* which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. As it was their ignorance or errour in this point, which disposed them to persecute our Lord (*nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset*, as *Tertullian* saith; *if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, saith St. *Paul*) so it was that, which maintained their obstinate hatred of his name and memory; although graced with so illustrious testimonies of divine power and providence.

1 Cor. 1. 23. Acts 13. 27. 3. 17. John 15. 21. Tert. *in* Marc. 3. 6. 2 Cor. 2. 8.

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We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars concerning our Lord, alledge the general conſent of God's people in expounding the Prophets according to our ſenſe, this being one of thoſe points, in reſpect to which the Prophets themſelves did foreſee, and foretel their perverſe ſtupidity, and incredulity; that *they ſhould look, and not ſee; hear, and not underſtand*; yielding herein ſpecial occaſion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* Yet notwithſtanding their affected, and culpable blindneſs, there is no particular concerning the *Meſſias* in the ancient *Scriptures*, either more frequently in way of myſtical inſinuation and adumbration, glanced at, or more clearly, in direct and plain language expreſſed; or which alſo by reaſonable deduction thence may be more ſtrongly inferred than this. *Vid.* Tert. *ibid.* Iſa. 6. 9. Matt. 13. 13. Ezek. 12. 2. Acts 28. 26. Iſa. 53. 1.

1. I ſay, *firſt*, it is frequently glanced at by myſtical inſinuations; for explaining the intent of which aſſertion, we ſhall premiſe ſomewhat, which may ſerve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the *ancient Scripture* in the *New Teſtament*; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing juſt analogy to them, we alſo, being aſſured of their deſign by the authority of our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles*, may ſafely preſume after them to apply to the ſame purpoſes.

We may then conſider, that the All-wiſe God, (who *worketh all things after the counſel of his own will*, and *to whom all things are preſent*) having *before eternal times* (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) determined in due time to ſend the *Meſſias*, for accompliſhing the greateſt deſign that ever was to be managed in this World (that which ſhould bring the higheſt glory to himſelf, and procure the richeſt benefits to the principal of his Creatures here) did by his incomprehenſible providence ſo order things, that all the ſpecial diſpenſations preceding it ſhould have a fit tendency, and an advantageous reference thereto; ſo that, when it came upon the ſtage, it might appear that the main of the plot conſiſted therein; and that whatever was acted before, had principally a reſpect thereto: As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations towards it, by ſeveral ſteps imparting diſcoveries of his mind about it, or in order thereto, (ſomewhat to *Adam* himſelf, more to *Abraham* and the *Patriarchs*, ſomewhat farther to *Moſes*, much more yet to divers of the *Prophets*, among his choſen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of inſtruction conformable to it, and conducible to the promoting and entertainment thereof) ſo he did alſo take eſpecial care by many oppoſite repreſentations (ῥητὰ θεωρήματα, *intelligible Spectacles*, or objects of mental ſpeculation, *Euſebius* calleth them) handſomely inſerted into all his diſpenſations, to ſet it out, and to inſinuate his meaning about it; that ſo it might at length ſhew it ſelf with more ſolemnity, and leſs ſurpriſe: the moſt eminent perſons therefore, whom he raiſed up, and employed in his affairs, tending to that end, as they did reſemble the *Meſſias*, in being inſtruments of God's particular grace and providence (being indeed inferiour *Chriſts*, and Mediatours, partial Saviours, and Redeemers of his people, as they are ſometimes called) ſo they were ordered in ſeveral circumſtances of their perſons, in divers actions they performed, in the principal accidents befalling them to repreſent him (becoming εἰκονικοὶ χριστοὶ, *Chriſts in image*, as *Euſebius* again ſtyleth them:) the rites alſo and ſervices of Religion inſtituted by them in God's name were adapted to the ſame purpoſe; they and all things about them, by God's eſpecial direction and wiſe care, being fitted ſo as to be congruous emblems and ſhadows prefiguring *Chriſt*, and whatever appertained to him: thus was *Adam* (as St. *Paul* calleth him) *a type of Chriſt*; and *Abel*, *Melchiſedec*, Eph. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 1. 3. 3. 9. Rom. 16. 25. Col. 1. 26. Euſeb. *Hiſt.* l. 3. Pſal. 105. 15. Iſa. 45. 1. Heb. 8. 6. Gal. 3. 19. Nah. 9. 27. Acts 7. 35. Euſeb. *Hiſt.* l. 14. Heb. 8. 5. Exod. 25. 40. Rom. 5. 14. *Vid.* Euſeb. *ib.*

chiſedec, *Iſaac*, *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Zorobabel* are intimated to have been ſuch; the moſt ſignal things done by them or befalling them, having been ſuted to anſwer ſomewhat remarkable concerning him; ſo that we may ſay of them all, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* did of the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, *they ſerved to the ſubindication, and ſhewing of heavenly things.* In *David* particularly this relation is ſo plain, that becauſe thereof, in the Prophets *Jeremy*, *Ezekiel* and *Hoſea*, the *Meſſias* is called by his name; as if he were revived in the *Meſſias*. It indeed well ſuted the dignity of this great perſonage, and the importance of his buſineſs, that he ſhould have appointed ſo notable heralds and harbingers to *go before his face*; furniſhed with conſpicuous enſigns and badges denoting their relation to him. It was proper, that God ſhould appear to have had always an expreſs regard toward him: It conſequently doth ſerve to our edification; for that we duly comparing things, and eſpying this admirable correſpondency, may be inſtructed thereby, and eſtabliſhed in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wiſdom, ſo harmoniouſly connecting things, and of his goodneſs, ſo provident for our welfare; may alſo be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Meſſias*, and to eſteem his deſign: ſuch uſes St. *Paul* ſignifieth, when having compared divers things concerning *Moſes* to things concerning *Chriſt*, he ſaith; *All theſe things happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.*

Heb 8 5. Οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.

Jer. 30. 9. Hoſ. 3. 5. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. 37. 24. 25.

(Heb. 5. 8. 10. 1. 9. 23. Gal. 4. 24. Col. 2. 17.)

1 Cor. 10. 11. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

It is alſo (both for illuſtration, and proof of theſe things) to be obſerved, that becauſe thoſe eminent Servants of God were Repreſentatives of *Chriſt*, many things are ſpoken of them, as ſuch; many things are aſcribed to them; which only, or chiefly were intended of him; their names are uſed as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it ſeemed to divine wiſdom not ſo convenient in a more open and clear manner to diſcloſe promiſcuouſly to all men. That this obſervation is true; that, I ſay, under the names of perſons repreſenting *Chriſt*, (or of things, we may add, adumbrating his things) many things are intimated principally concerning him, and his diſpenſations, may be collected, and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to perſons (and to things alſo) which do not agree to them; many things were promiſed, which appear never accompliſhed, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of expreſſion, or according to an enormous wideneſs of interpretation; ſuch as do not well ſeem to ſute the nature of true hiſtories, and ſerious promiſes: thus, for inſtance, many things are foretold concerning the large extent, and proſperous ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Church; which hiſtory and experience do teſtify never (according to ſtrictneſs of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what the words import) to have come to paſs: thus alſo (as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* argueth) effects are attributed to the *Jewiſh* rites and ſacrifices, which according to the nature of things cannot belong to them, otherwiſe than as ſubſtitutes, and ſhadows of things more high in ſubſtance, and efficacy: thus alſo what is with ſolemn oath promiſed to *Solomon* (concerning the vaſt extent, and endleſs duration of his empire in righteouſneſs, peace and proſperity; together with his mighty acts, and ſucceſsful atchievements (doth not appear directly in any competent meaſure to have been accompliſhed: thus alſo *David* (as St. *Peter* in the 2*d* of the *Acts* obſerveth, and groundeth his argumentation on it) ſpeaketh divers things of himſelf; which cannot be con-

Iſa. 25. 8.

Heb. 10. 4.

Pſal. 45. 72, 83, *&c.*

Acts 2. 29.

conceived properly and literally agreeable to him: ſuch things therefore (having ſome truth under them) are reaſonably ſuppoſed to be intimations of ſomewhat appertaining to the future more perfect ſtate of things under the *Meſſias*; to concern him (who was to be *the end of the law*) and his diſpenſation, which was to be the accompliſhment of all things predicted and preſignified: that is that, which St. *Auſtin* ſignifieth, when he ſaith of *Chriſt*, that, *Him all the promiſes of the Jewiſh Nation, all their prophecies, prieſthoods, ſacrifices, their temple, and all their ſacraments whatever did reſound*, or expreſs.

Rom. 10. 4. 2 Cor. 13. 13. Luke 22. 37. 1 Pet. 1. 10, *&c.*

Quem Chriſtum —— omnia gentis illius promiſſa, omnes prophetiæ, ſacerdotia ſacrificia, templum, & cuncta omninò ſacramenta ſonuerunt. Aug. *ad* Voluſ. *Ep.* 3.

Neither are theſe things only ſaid according to ſuppoſitions aſſumed in the *New Teſtament*; but they agree (as to their general importance) to that ſenſe of the ancient *Jews*, who did conceive ſuch myſterious references often to lie couched under the letter of the Scriptures: they did ſuppoſe every where a *Midraſh*, or myſtical ſenſe; which they very ſtudiouſly (even to an exceſs of curioſity and diligence) ſearched after: it was a conſtant and confident opinion of their Doctours, that all things in *Moſes* his Law were typical, and capable of allegorical expoſition; and *Philo*'s writings (compoſed immediately after our Saviour's times) do ſhew that opinion then to have been paſſable. We have alſo ſeveral inſtances and intimations thereof in the *New Teſtament*: neither is it probable that our Lord and the *Apoſtles* would in their diſcourſes and diſputations with the *Jews* have uſed this way of alledging and interpreting paſſages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Vid. Capell. *in Exerc. ad* Zohar.

Why God ſhould chuſe to expreſs matters of this nature in ſuch a manner, we need not to determine; it might be perhaps for reaſons only known to himſelf, above our ken, or cogniſance; yet divers probable reaſons may be aſſigned for it, yea ſome more than probable, ſeeing they are expreſſed, or hinted in Scripture: It might be for a decent, and harmonious diſcrimination of times, of diſpenſations, of perſons; it might be from the depth of things to conciliate reverence to them, and to raiſe the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by exerciſe to improve the underſtandings of men, to inflame their deſire, to excite their induſtry, to provoke their devotion, to render them modeſt and humble; it might be for occaſion to reward an honeſt, and diligent ſtudy of God's word; and to convey ſpecial gifts of interpretation; it might be to conceal ſome things from ſome perſons unworthy, or unfit to know them; eſpecially from haughty and ſelf-conceited perſons; it might be to uſe the ignorance of ſome as a means to produce ſome great events; ſuch as was the miſuſing and perſecuting our Lord: for ſuch reaſons it might be, and there is no good reaſon againſt it; for it cannot be ſuppoſed neceſſary, that all things ſhould be plainly diſcovered at all times, and to all perſons; it is evident that ſome things are couched in parabolical, and myſterious expreſſion; it is particularly the manner of prophetical inſtruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every ſeaſon, nor ſuitable to every capacity; but reſerved for times, and perſons, for which the divine wiſdom only knows them moſt proper.

Vid. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 649, *&c.* 658. *&c.*

Apoc. 2. 7. 13. 18. 17. 9. Mat. 13. 9. 24. 15. Dan. 9. 1. John 5. 39. Luke 24. 45. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 14. 26. Eph. 1. 9, 10. Matt. 13. 13. 11. 25. 7. 6. 1 Cor. 2 8. Acts 3. 17.

Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Theſe things being thus premiſed, we come to our particular caſe, and ſay, that (according to what our *Lord*, and his *Apoſtles* teach) the *Meſſias* his being to ſuffer was in divers paſſages of the ancient Scripture prefigured: ſuppoſing the thing it ſelf determined to be, there are peculiar reaſons, why it rather ſo, than in a more open manner, ſhould be re-

represented, contained in thoſe words of *Tertullian*: *The Sacrament indeed* (ſaith he) *of Chriſt's paſſion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predications; for as much as that the more incredible it was* (*if it ſhould have been preached nakedly*) *the more offenſive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overſhadowed, that the difficulty of underſtanding it might be cauſe of ſeeking of God's grace.* Suppoſing it alſo that it ſhould be, it is plain that the paſſages about *Abel*, *Iſaac*, *Joſias*, *Jeremy*, and the like may congruouſly be applied thereto; that the elevation of the *Brazen Serpent*, and the ſlaying the *Paſchal* Lamb may appoſitely repreſent it; the *Jewiſh Prieſts*, with all their Sacrifices, may alſo with reaſon be brought in, and accommodated thereto: theſe things indeed by themſelves ſolitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince, that it ſhould be; yet do they handſomly ſute it, and adorn the ſuppoſition thereof; according to the notion premiſed about the figurative relation between the matters of the *Old* World before the *Meſſias*, and the *New* one after him. But with a clearer evidence, and ſtronger force we may affirm, that the *Meſſias* his ſufferings were implied in the afflictions, aſcribed to his repreſentative King *David*, ſuch as he in ſeveral *Pſalms* (in the 35, 69, 109, 118, and eſpecially in the 22 *Pſalm*) deſcribeth them; wherein divers paſſages, expreſſing the extreme ſadneſs; and forlornneſs of his condition, occur, which by the hiſtory of his life do not ſo well according to the literal ſignification of words, appear congruous to his perſon; which therefore there is a neceſſity, or at leaſt much reaſon, that they ſhould be applied to the *Meſſias*, whom that *Holy King* did repreſent.

Utique ſacramentum paſſionis ipſius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat quantòque incredibile, tanto magis ſcandalum futurum, quantòque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultatas intellectûs gratiam Dei quæreret. Tert. *in* Jud. 10.

Which being admitted, comparing the paſſages we find there to that which befel *Jeſus*, we may obſerve an admirable harmony; there being ſcarce any part of his affliction in his life, or at any circumſtance thereof at his death, which is not in expreſs and emphatical terms there ſet out: there we have expreſſed his low, and deſpicable ſtate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people*) the cauſeleſs hatred and enmity of the populacy, and of the great ones toward him (*They that hate me without a cauſe are more than the hairs of my head; they that would deſtroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; they compaſſed me about with words of hatred, and fought againſt me without a cauſe*) the ingrateful requital for all the good intended, and performed by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love*) their rejecting him (*The ſtone which the builders refuſed is become the head-ſtone in the corner.*) Their inſidious, and calumnious proceeding againſt him, (*without cauſe have they hid for me their net, in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my ſoul.* And, *Falſe witneſſes did riſe up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not*; and, *The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened againſt me; they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying tongue.*) Their bitter inſulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together; yea the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me:*) *They perſecute him, whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of thoſe, whom thou haſt wounded:* καὶ ὅτι τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσθήκαν, *and to the ſmart of my wounds they have added*; ſay the LXXII.) Their ſcornful, reviling, flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot the lip, they ſhake the head; ſaying, He truſted in the Lord, that he ſhould deliver him, let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighteth*

Pſal. 22. 9.
Pſal. 69. 4. 35. 7. 109. 3.
Pſal. 35. 12. 109. 5.
Pſal. 118. 22.
Pſal. 35. 7. 11. 109. 2.
Pſa. 35. 15. 69. 26.
Pſal. 109. 25. 35. 22. 16. 22. 6, 7.

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in him. And, *I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they ſhaked their heads; they opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, Aha, aha, our eye hath ſeen it.* Ἐπίεσαν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμόν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν· *they tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnaſhed their teeth upon me.)* Their cruel and contemptuous uſage of him; *(Dogs have compaſſed me; the aſſembly of the wicked have incloſed me; they pierced my hands, and my feet; I may tell all my bones; they look, and ſtare upon me.)* Their abuſive dealing with him, when he in his diſtreſs called for ſome refreſhment; *(They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink.)* Their diſpoſal of his garments upon his ſuffering, *(They part my garments among them, and caſt lots upon my veſture.)* His being deſerted of his friends and followers; and thence deſtitute of all conſolation; *(I am become a ſtranger to my bretbren, and an alien unto my mother's children; ----- I am full of heavineſs, and I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.)* The ſenſe of God's with-holding his favour, and help; *(My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? why art thou ſo far from helping me?)* His charitable diſpoſition and demeanour toward his enemies and perſecutours; *(But as for me, when they were ſick* (when they did trouble me, ſay the *LXX.*) *my cloathing was ſackcloath, I humbled my ſelf with faſting, and my prayer returned into my own boſome; I behaved my ſelf as though it had been my friend, or brother, I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.)* Which paſſages, and the like, how patly, and punctually they do ſquare to reſpective paſſages in the *Goſpels*, I need not to ſhew; we do, I preſume, all of us well enough remember that both moſt doleful and comfortable hiſtory, to be able our ſelves to make the application.

Pſal. 22. 16. Pſal. 69. 21. Pſal. 22. 18. Pſal. 69. 9. 20. Pſal. 22. 1. 69. 17. Ἐν τῷ αὐτὸς παρενοχλῶν μοι. Pſal. 35. 13, &c.

But there farther are not only ſuch oblique intimations, of ſignifications of this matter ſhrowded under the coverture of other perſons, and names; but very direct, and immediate predictions, concerning the *Meſſias* his being to ſuffer, moſt clearly expreſſed: that whole famous *Chapter* (the 53d) of *Eſay*, doth moſt evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, cauſes, ends, and conſequences of his ſufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically repreſented: his appearing meanneſs *(He hath no form, or comelineſs; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty, that we ſhould deſire him:)* the diſgrace, contempt, repulſes, and rejection he underwent *(He is diſpiſed and rejected of men ---- we hid our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not,)* His afflicted ſtate *(He is a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted,)* the bitter, and painful manner of his affliction (He *was ſtricken*; he *bare ſtripes*; he *was wounded and bruiſed*) his being accuſed, adjudged and condemned as a malefactour *(He was taken from priſon, and from judgment ---- he was numbred among the tranſgreſſours)* his death conſequent *(He poured out his ſoul unto death; he was cut out of the Land of the living)* the deſign and end of his ſufferings; they were appointed, and inflicted by divine providence for our ſake, and in our ſtead; for the expiation of our ſins; and our ſalvation. *(It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him; he hath put him to grief ---- when thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin------he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities----the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed-- --ſurely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows ------for the tranſgreſſion of my people he was ſmitten ------ the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all)* his ſuſtaining all this with a willing, quiet, humble patience, and perfect meekneſs *(He*

Eſ. 53. v. 2. v. 3. v. 3, 4. v. 5, 8. v. 8, 12. v. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6. 12.

v. 7. *was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth)* his charitable praying for his perſecutors, and de-
v. 12. ſigning their welfare *(He made interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſours)* the bleſſed conſequences, and happy ſucceſs of his ſufferings, in the converſion, and juſtification of men; in performing God's will and work; in being
v. 10, 11, 12. ſatisfied, rewarded, and exalted himſelf *(He ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand; he ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied; by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many; ----I will divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong)* which paſſages as they do moſt exactly ſuit unto *Jeſus*, and might in a ſort conſtitute a true hiſtorical narration of what he did endure; together with the doctrines delivered in the Goſpel concerning the intents, and effects of his ſufferings; ſo that they did according to the intention of the divine ſpirit, relate to the *Meſſias* may from ſeveral conſiderations be made apparent; the context, and coherence of all this paſſage with the matters precedent and ſubſequent, the which plainly do reſpect the *Meſſias*, and his times, do argue it: *How*
Iſa. 27. 5, 13. *beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him, that bringeth good tidings*; and, *Behold my ſervant ſhall deal prudently*, &c. are paſſages immediately going before; to which this *Chapter* is knit in way of continuation; and
Iſa. 54. 1, &c. immediately after it doth follow: *Sing, O barren, thou, that didſt not bear*, &c. being a no leſs perſpicuous, than elegant deſcription of the Church, enlarged by acceſſion of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to paſs by the *Meſſias*. The general ſcope of this whole prophecy enforceth the ſame concluſion; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other perſon imaginable beſide the *Meſſias* doth farther evince it; ſo high are the things aſcribed to the ſuffering perſon; as that he ſhould *bear the ſins of all God's people, and heal them*; that he ſhould *by his knowledge juſtify many* (or the multitude) that *the pleaſure of the Lord ſhould proſper in his hand* to theſe grand purpoſes; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he ſhould divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*; the magnificency and importance of which ſayings (rightly underſtood and weighed) do well agree to the *Meſſias*, but not to any other perſon, or ſimple man: whence if the ancient *Jews* had reaſon to believe a *Meſſias* was to come (as they with general conſent did ſuppoſe they had) they had as much reaſon to apply this place, as any other, to him, and thence to acknowledge that he was deſigned to be an eminent ſufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient *Targumiſts*, and moſt learned *Rabbins* did expound this place of the one *Meſſias*, which was to come; as the *Pugio fidei*, and other learned *Writers* do by ſeveral expreſs teſtimonies declare. This place alſo diſcovereth the vanity of that figment, deviſed by ſome later *Jews*; who to evade it, and to oppoſe *Jeſus*, have affirmed there was to be a double *Meſſias*; one, who ſhould be much afflicted; another, who ſhould greatly proſper; ſince we may obſerve, that here both great afflictions and glorious performances concurrently are aſcribed to the ſame Perſon.

The ſame things are by parts alſo clearly foretold in other places of this Prophet, and in other prophetical Scriptures: By *Eſay* again in the *Chapter* immediately preceeding; *Behold* (ſaith God there) *my ſervant*
Iſa. 52. 13, 14. *ſhall deal prudently, he ſhall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high*; there is God's ſervant (he, who in way of excellency is ſuch, that is, in the ſtyle of this *Prophet*, the *Meſſias*) in his real glorious capacity; it followeth concerning his external appearance; *His viſage was ſo marred more than any mans, and his form more than the ſons of men*: and again, in

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the 49th *Chapter*; *Thus ſaith the Lord, the redeemer of Iſrael, and his Holy one; to him, whom man deſpiſeth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a ſervant of rulers, Kings ſhall ſee, and ariſe, Princes alſo ſhall worſhip:* what can be more expreſs and clear, than that it is ſignified here, that the *Meſſias*, who ſhould ſubject the World, with its ſovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and veneration of himſelf, was to be deſpiſed by men, to be detested by the *Jewiſh* people, to appear in a ſervile, and baſe condition? the ſame *Prophet* doth again in the 50th *Chapter* bring him in ſpeaking thus: *I give my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame, and ſpitting:* his offending the *Jews*, ſo as thereby to aggravate their ſins, and accelerate their puniſhments, is alſo thus expreſſed by the ſame *Prophet: And he he ſhall be for a ſanctuary, but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houſes of Iſrael; for a gin, and for a ſnare to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem.* Iſa. 49. 7. Iſa. 50. 6. Iſa. 8. 14. (Pſal. 2. 2.)

The Prophet *Zachary* doth alſo in ſeveral places very roundly expreſs his ſufferings; his low condition in thoſe words; *Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly, and riding upon an Aſs*; (that is, *pauper*, mean and ſorry to appearance.) His manner of death in thoſe words: *Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the man, that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts; ſmite the Shepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered*; and again; *I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem the ſpirit of grace, and of ſupplications, and they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn*, &c. The *Prophet Daniel* alſo in that place, from which probably the name *Meſſias* was taken, and which moſt expreſly mentioneth him, ſaith, that *after 62 weeks the Meſſias ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf*-----Now from all theſe paſſages of *Scripture* (beſide divers others to the ſame purpoſe, obſervable by thoſe, whoſe induſtry is aſſiſted by divine illumination) we may well conclude with our Lord, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν· *that thus it was written, and thus* (according to the Prophet's foreſhewing) *it was to happen, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer*; ſuffer in a life of penury, and diſgrace, in a death of ſorrow and ſhame. Zech. 9. 9. Zech. 13. 7. Zech. 12. 10. Dan. 9. 25. Luke 24. 46.

That it was to fall out thus, might alſo be well inferred, by reaſons grounded upon the qualities of the *Meſſias* his perſon, and upon the nature of his performances, ſuch as they are deſcribed in Prophetical *Scripture:* He was to be really, and plainly to appear a perſon of moſt admirable virtue, and goodneſs; but never (as even *Pagan* Philoſophers are obſerved) was, or can there be any ſuch without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an univerſal pattern to men of all ſorts (eſpecially to the greateſt part of men, that is, to the poor, and afflicted) of *all righteouſneſs*; to exemplify particularly the moſt difficult pieces of duty; (*Humility, Patience, Meekneſs, Charity, Self-denial, entire reſignation* to God's will) this he ſhould not have had opportunity, or advantage of doing, ſhould he have been high, wealthy, ſplendid, and proſperous in ſecular matters, he was to exerciſe great pity, and ſympathy toward all mankind; toward the doing what it was requiſite that he ſhould himſelf taſte and feel the inconveniences, troubles, pains and ſorrows incident to us. He was to advance the repute of ſpiritual goods, and eternal bleſſings, depreſſing the value of thoſe corporeal and temporal things, which men do ſo fondly admire, and dote on: the moſt compendious, and effectual way of doing which, was by an exemplary neglect, or rejection of worldly glories, and enjoyments; refuſing the honours, profits and pleaſures here, adjoyned to a high ſtate. He was by the moſt kindly, gentle and peaceable means to erect a Spiritual Kingdom; by pure force of Plato, Seneca, &c. *Vide* Theodoti, *Orat. in* Eph. 1. *Cum.* *cil. p.* 997.

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reaſon to ſubdue the hearts and conſciences of men to the love, and obedience of God; by wiſe inſtruction to raiſe in us the hopes of future recompences in Heaven; to the accompliſhment of which purpoſes temporal glory (working on the carnal apprehenſions and affections of men) had rather been prejudicial, than conducible. He was to accompliſh and manage his great deſigns by means ſupernatural, and divine, the which would ſurely become more conſpicuous by the viſible meanneſs, and impotency of his ſtate. He was alſo moſt highly to merit from God, for himſelf, and for us (to merit God's high approbation of what he did, God's favour and grace to us) this he could not perform ſo well, as by willingly enduring for God's ſake, and in our behalf the moſt hard and grievous things. He was in fine deſigned *perfectly to ſave us*; and conſequently to appeaſe God's wrath, to ſatisfy divine juſtice, to expiate our ſins; whereto it was requiſite, that he ſhould undergo what he had deſerved, being puniſhed and afflicted for us.

Now that *Jeſus*, our *Lord*, did moſt thoroughly correſpond to whatever is in this kind declared by the *Prophets* concerning the *Meſſias*, we need not by minutely relating the known hiſtory of his life, and death make out any farther, ſince the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adverſary can deny it; I ſhall therefore conclude, that it is a clear, and certain truth, which St. *Peter* in our text affirmeth, that, *Thoſe things which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled.*

Apoc. 1. 5. Now, *unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings, and Prieſts unto God, and his Father; to him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon XLV.

A Whit-Sunday Sermon of the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

ACTS II. 38.

---And ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt.

AMong the divers reaſonable grounds and ends of the obſerving *Feſtival* Solemnities (ſuch as are comforting the poor by hoſpitable relief, refreſhing the weary labourer by ceſſation from ordinary toil, maintaining good-will among neighbours by chearful and free con-

converſation, quickning our ſpirits and raiſing our fancies by extraordinary repreſentations and divertiſements, infuſing and preſerving good humour in people; ſuch as are alſo the decent conſpiring in publick expreſſions of ſpecial reverence to God, withdrawing our minds from ſecular cares, and engaging them to ſpiritual meditations) the two principal deſigns of them ſeem to be theſe.

Θεοὶ δ' οἰκείαν τὴν πρὸς ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον πεφυκὸς γένος, ἀναπαύλας τὲ αὐτοῖς πόνων ἐτεύξατο, καὶ ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς. Philo 2. *de Leg.*

Legum conditores feſtos inſtituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publicè congerentur, tanquam neceſſarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum. Sen. *de Tranq. an.* 15.

1. The affording occaſion (or rather impoſing a conſtraint upon us) with a competent frequency to attend unto, to conſider upon, to inſtruct our ſelves and others in the myſterious doctrines and inſtitutions of our Religion.

2. The engaging us ſeaſonably to practice that great duty of thankfully remembring and praiſing God for thoſe eminent mercies, and favours, which by his great grace and goodneſs have been vouchſafed to us.

For theſe purpoſes chiefly did God himſelf appoint the *Jewiſh* Feſtivals; for inſtance the *Paſſover*, the reaſon of which being inſtituted is thus expreſſed; *that thou mayſt remember the day, when thou cameſt forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life*; which words imply that the obſervation of that Solemnity did ſerve to preſerve the memory, yea the continual remembrance of that ſo notable a bleſſing, which otherwiſe might have been totally forgotten, or ſeldom conſidered; the ſame did alſo ſuggeſt occaſion of inquiry concerning the reaſons of its appointment, procuring conſequently needful information in that material point of their religion; as doth appear by thoſe words of God. *And it ſhall come to paſs, when your children ſhall ſay unto you, what mean ye by this ſervice? that ye ſhall ſay, it is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Paſſover*; ---- Deut. 16. 3. Exod. 12. 26.

In compliance with which prudent deſigns, the *Chriſtian* Church, from her firſt infancy, hath embraced the opportunity of recommending to her children the obſervation of her chief holy *Feſtivals*, continuing the time, and retaining the name, although changing or improving, the matter and reaſon of thoſe ancient ones; the divine providence concurring to further ſuch proceeding, by ſo ordering the events of things, that the ſeaſons of diſpenſing the *Evangelical* bleſſings ſhould fall in with thoſe, wherein the *Legal* benefits moſt reſembling and repreſenting them were commemorated; that ſo there might be as well a happy co-incidence of time, as correſpondence in matter between the ancient and new Solemnities; whence as the exhibitation of *Evangelical* doctrines and myſteries did meet with minds more ſutably prepared to entertain them, and as leſs innovation from former uſage did appear (a thing obſervable to be reſpected in moſt, or all the *poſitive* inſtitutions of our religion) ſo withall *Chriſtians* were engaged, while they conſidered the greater mercies by God vouchſafed to them, to reflect alſo upon the favours, from the ſame ſtock of goodneſs, indulged by him to his ancient people; that as thoſe ſhould chiefly be remembered, ſo theſe ſhould not wholly be forgotten: thus did god diſpoſe, that our *Saviour* ſhould then ſuffer, when the *Paſchal Lamb* was to be offered; or that the redemption of the world from ſin and miſery ſhould then be celebrated by us, when the deliverance from the *Egyptian* ſlavery was commemorated by them: and ſo (that we may approach to our purpoſe) at the time of *Pentecoſt*, when the *Jews* were obliged to *rejoyce before the Lord*, rendring thanks unto him for the harveſt newly gathered in, and the earths good fruits (the main ſupports and comforts of this life) were by God's bleſſing be- Aug. *de Civ. D.* 10. 4. Deut. 16.

beſtowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the *firſt fruits* of his *Holy Spirit*, the food of our ſouls and refreſhment of our hearts; then did he cauſe his labourers to put their ſickle into the ſpiritual harveſt; converting ſouls and gathering them as mature fruits into the garners of the Church.

At the very ſeaſon (which is remarkable) that the *Law* was delivered to the *Jews*, and the *ancient Covenant* eſtabliſhed which did happen at *Pentecoſt*, as may be probably collected from the *Text*, and is commonly ſuppoſed by the *Jewiſh* Doctours, who therefore call this *Feaſt* חג שמחה תורה, *the joy* (or joyful Feaſt) *of the law*, in ſignification of their joy, uſing then to crown their heads with garlands, and ſtrew their houſes with green herbs) at that very time was the *Chriſtian* Law moſt ſignally promulged, and the *new Covenant*'s ratification moſt ſolemnly declared by the miraculous effuſion of the divine Spirit.

Exod. 19. 1.

Πεντηκοστὴν ἑορτάζομεν, ἡ πνεύματος δόσιν, ἡ προθεσμίαν ἐπαγγελίας, ἡ ἐλπίδος συμπλήρωσιν, &c. Naz. Orat. 44.

The benefit therefore and bleſſing, which at this time we are bound eſpecially to conſider and commemorate, is in effect the publication and eſtabliſhment of the Covenant *Evangelical*, the foundation of all our hopes, and all our claims to happineſs; but more immediately and directly the donation of the *Holy Spirit* to the *Chriſtian* Church, and to all its members; for the better underſtanding, and more truly valuing of which moſt excellent benefit, let us briefly declare the nature, and deſign thereof.

Almighty God, ſeeing the generality of mankind alienated from himſelf by groſs ignorance of its duty toward him, and by habitual inclinations to violate his holy laws (originally implanted by him in our nature, or anciently revealed to our firſt parents) immerſed in errour, enſlaved to vice, and obnoxious to the woful conſequences of them, ſevere puniſhment, and extreme miſery; was pleaſed in his immenſe goodneſs and pity to deſign its reſcue from that ſad condition; and in purſuance of that gracious deſign did reſolve upon expedients the moſt admirable, and moſt efficacious that could be: for to redeem men from the tyranny of ſin and hell, to reconcile them to himſelf, to recover them into a happy ſtate, he ſent his own only beloved Son out of his boſome into this world, clothed with our nature; by him, as by a *plenipotentiary Commiſſioner* from himſelf, inviting all men to return unto him; declaring himſelf by the meritorious obedience, the expiatory paſſion, the effectual interceſſion of his dear Son abundantly ſatisfied for, and ready to grant a full pardon of all offences committed againſt him in their ſtate of errour and eſtrangement; to admit them into a ſtate of preſent indempnity and peace, yea to ſettle them in perpetual alliance and friendſhip with himſelf: upon moſt fair and gentle terms; namely, that renouncing their erroneous principles, and reforming their vitious courſe of life, they chearfully would embrace his merciful overtures, and thereafter conform their lives to his righteous laws; the which, together with all his good intentions concerning them, he, by the ſame bleſſed Agent, clearly diſcovered to them; fully by him inſtructing them in their duty, and ſtrongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the promiſe of moſt bountiful rewards; his certain love and favour attended with endleſs joy and bliſs: thus *did*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it, *the ſaving grace of God appear unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world, expecting that bleſſed hope.*

Tit. 2. 11.

But

But to render this wonderfully gracious deſign ſucceſsful, in a way of wiſdom, and reaſonable proceeding, accommodated to the capacities of humane nature, it was requiſite, that there ſhould be provided convincing arguments to perſuade men of the truth and reality of theſe things (that indeed ſuch an extraordinary *Agent*, with ſuch a meſſage was come from heaven) effectual means of admoniſhing and exciting men to a heedful advertency towards them, competent motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a power alſo ſufficient, notwithſtanding their natural impotency and inſtability, to continue them in the belief, to uphold them in the practice of the duties preſcribed, in the performance of the conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly thoſe intentions towards us, or if we did not much regard the overture of them, or if we did not conceive the buſineſs highly to concern us; or if reſolving to comply with the *Goſpel*, we yet were unable to diſcharge the conditions thereof, the deſign would totally be fruſtrated, and of it ſelf come to nothing: to prevent which diſappointment of his merciful intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and meaſure ſuitable to the glorious importance of them; for to the miniſtery of his eternal wiſdom he adjoyned the efficacy of his eternal love, and bleſſed Spirit; the which not only conducted *God our Saviour* into his fleſhly tabernacle, and with *unmeaſurable communications* of himſelf did continually reſide within him, but alſo did attend him in the conſpicuous performance of numberleſs miraculous works, implying divine power and goodneſs, as exceeding not only any natural, but all created power (ſuch as were by mere word and will healing the ſick, and reſtoring the maimed; ejecting evil ſpirits, diſcerning the ſecret thoughts of men, foretelling contingent events, reviving the dead, raiſing himſelf from the grave) which works, (ſome expreſly, others by parity of reaſon) are aſcribed to the Holy Spirit; for, *If* (ſaith our *Lord*) *I by the ſpirit of God caſt out Devils*----, and, *God* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *anointed him with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power*; *who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed by the Devil*: and, *Who* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the reſurrection from the dead*: So did God afford the moſt evident atteſtation that could be to the truth of our Saviour's quality, commiſſion and doctrine; by ſo clear, and rouſing ſignifications did God invite men to take notice of theſe things.

John 3. 34.

Matt. 12. 28. Acts 10. 38.

Rom. 1. 4.

But farther to induce them heartily to comply with theſe gracious overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the purpoſe deſigned, the ſalvation of men, according to the terms preſcribed of faith in God, and obedience to his commandments, God was pleaſed farther to reſolve, and he faithfully did promiſe that he would impart the ſame *Bleſſed Spirit*, as a continual guide and aſſiſtance to all thoſe, who ſeriouſly would entertain thoſe tenders of mercy, ſincerely reſolving the performance of the conditions.

Now although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's operation (like that of all Spirits, and more ſubtile ſubſtances) is not by violent and ſenſible impreſſions, but rather in way of imperceptible penetration, or gentle inſinuating of it ſelf into the ſubject upon which it worketh, hardly diſcovering it ſelf otherwiſe than by the notable effects reſulting from it; and altho likewiſe the proper and principal effects thereof, according to divine deſignation, do relate to the furthering our performance of

Καὶ γὰρ τὸ θεῖον ἀπέλαυσας χάριτος βαπτιζόμενος, καὶ πνεύματος μετέσχες, οὐ καὶ μὰ πρὸς τὸ σημεῖα ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ πολιτείαν ὀρθὴν, καὶ ἠκριβωμένην λαβεῖν. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 12. *ad* Demet.

the ſaid conditions requiſite toward our ſalvation, that is, to the cheriſhing our faith, and quickning our obedience; diſpoſing men to perform vertuous actions, rather than to atchieve wondrous exploits; yet more fully to ſatisfie the doubtful, to convince the incredulous, (to confound the obſtinate) world about the truth of his intentions, more illuſtriouſly to manifeſt the completion of his promiſe, more ſurely to fortifie the faithful againſt the ſcandals and temptations, which their profeſſion would incur, God was pleaſed after our *Lord*'s aſcenſion, and when the *Apoſtolical* promulgation of the *Chriſtian Doctrine* did commence, to diſpence both to the Teachers and the Diſciples thereof more liberal communications of that *Holy Spirit*, attended with notorious, ſtrange and wonderful effects, apt to provoke the admiration of men, to perſuade their judgments, to prevail upon their affections, to produce within them ſtrong deſires of partaking ſo high a privilege, and excellent endowment.

Τῶν γὰρ χαρισμάτων ἦν πνευματικῶν τὰ μὲν ἀόρατα ἦν καὶ πίστει καλαμβάνεται μόνῳ, τὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὴν ἐνδείκνυσθαι σημεῖον πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀπίστων πληροφορίαν. Chryſ. *T.* 5. *Orat.* 88.

Acts 2.12,43. 4.14.9.11, 16. 1 Cor. 14.25.

The memorial therefore of that moſt gracious and glorious diſpenſation, the *Chriſtian* Church wiſely and piouſly hath continually preſerved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bleſs God for that incomparable and ineſtimable gift, conferred then moſt viſibly upon the Church, and ſtill really beſtowed upon every particular member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I ſay beſtowed upon every particular member of the Church; for the *Evangelical* Covenant doth extend to every Chriſtian; and a principal ingredient thereof is the collation of this Spirit; which is the *finger of God*, whereby (according to the Prophet *Jeremy*'s deſcription of that Covenant) *God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts*; *inſcribed* (as St. *Paul* alluſively ſpeaketh) *not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God*; *not in tables of ſtone, but in the fleſhly tables of the heart*; not only as the *Jewiſh* Law repreſented from without to the ſenſes, but impreſſed within upon the mind and affections; whence God's Spirit is called *the Spirit of promiſe*, the donation thereof being the peculiar promiſe of the Goſpel; and the end of our *Saviour*'s undertaking is by St. *Paul* declared, *that we might receive the promiſe of the Spirit by faith*, that is by embracing Chriſtianity might partake thereof, according to God's promiſes; and the Apoſtolical miniſtery or exhibition of the Goſpel is ſtyled *the miniſtration of the Spirit*, and *taſting of the heavenly gift, and participation of the Holy Ghoſt* is part of a Chriſtian's Charter; and the ſuſception of Chriſtianity is thus deſcribed by St. *Paul*; *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath choſen you from the beginning to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*; and our *Saviour* inſtructed *Nicodemus*, that *No man can enter into the Kingdom of God* (that is become a Chriſtian or ſubject of God's ſpiritual Kingdom) *without being regenerated by Water, and by the Spirit*, that is without *Baptiſm*, and the ſpiritual grace attending it; according as St. *Peter* doth in the words adjoyning to our *Text* imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to Holy Baptiſm; *Repent* (ſaith he) *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt*; *for the promiſe* (that great promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt) *is unto you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*; that is, the *Holy Spirit* is promiſed to all, how far ſoever diſtant in place or time, whoever ſhall be invited unto, and ſhall embrace the Chriſtian profeſſion. St. *John* alſo maketh

Luke 11. 20. Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. Ezek. 11. 19. John 6. 45. 2 Cor. 3. 3.

Πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Eph. 1. 13. Gal. 3. 14.

Διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος. 2 Cor. 3. 8. Heb. 6. 4. 2 Theſſ. 2. 13.

John 3. 5.

Acts 2. 38.

maketh it to be the diſtinctive mark of thoſe, in whom Chriſt abideth, and who dwell in Chriſt, that is of all true Chriſtians, to have this Spirit; *Hereby* (ſaith he) *we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*; and *Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*; and, St. *Paul* denieth him to be a good Chriſtian who is deſtitute thereof; *Now* (ſaith *he*) *if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*; and, *Know ye not*, ſaith *he* to the *Corinthians, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*? that is, do ye not underſtand this to be a common privilege of all Chriſtians, ſuch as ye profeſs your ſelves to be? and the converſion of men to Chriſtianity *he* thus expreſſeth; *After the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared; not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*; And all pious diſpoſitions qualifying us for entrance into heaven and happineſs (faith, charity, devotion, every grace, every vertue) are repreſented to be *fruits of the Holy Spirit*: and, the union of all Chriſtians into one body; the *Catholick* Society of all truly faithful people, doth, according to St. *Paul*, reſult from this one Spirit, as a common ſoul animating and actuating them: *for* (ſaith *he*) *by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.*

1 John 3. 24.
1 John 4. 13.
Rom. 8. 9.
1 Cor. 3. 16.
Tit. 3. 4.
Gal. 5. 22.
Eph. 5. 9.
Rom. 4. 5.
1 Cor. 12. 13.

In fine, whatever ſome few perſons, or ſome petty *Sects* (as the *Pelagians* of old, the *Socinians* now) may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine conſtantly, and with very general conſent delivered in the *Catholick* Church, that to all perſons by the holy myſtery of *Baptiſm* duly initiated to Chriſtianity, or admitted into the communion of Chriſt's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is beſtowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and vertue then undertaken by them; enlightning their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and aſſiſting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abuſed, ill treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved and encreaſed to them; it is therefore by *Tertullian* (in his *preſcriptions againſt Hereticks*) reckoned as part of that fundamental rule, which was grounded upon the general tradition, and conſent of the Chriſtian Church, that *Chriſt had ſent the vertue of the Holy Ghoſt, in his room, which doth act believers*; to which that *Article* doth anſwer of the *Apoſtolical Creed*, in which we profeſs to *believe the Holy Ghoſt*; meaning I ſuppoſe, thereby not only the bare exiſtence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, but alſo its gracious communication and energy.

Tert. *depræſc.* 13 —*miſiſſe, vicariam vim Spiritus Sancti, qui credentes agat.*

Since therefore the collation of this eminent gift and favour ſo nearly doth concern us all; ſeeing it is our preſent duty more eſpecially to praiſe and bleſs God for it; ſeeing alſo we are wont to commenſurate our gratitude to our eſtimation of the benefit, unto which it relateth, let us a little conſider the worth and excellency of this divine gift conferred on us.

That it is tranſcendently valuable we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's eſteem it did not only countervail, but in a manner ſurmount the benefit of his preſence; συμφέρει, *It is* (ſaid *he*) *expedient* (or profitable) *for you that I go away*; God having deſigned, that my abſence ſhall be ſupplied by the *Comforter*'s more beneficial preſence: and wonderfully beneficial ſurely muſt that preſence be, which could not only compenſate, but render advantageous the loſs of that moſt benign and ſweet converſation, that tender and watchful inſpection, that wholſome and powerful advice, that clear and lively pat-

John 16. 7.

tern of all goodneſs ſhining forth in our Saviour's life upon his diſciples: could there be a more indulgent Maſter, a more diſcreet guide, a more delightful companion, a more faithful friend, a mightier protectour, a ſurer aſſiſtant, a ſweeter comforter than he? Yes, it ſeemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon ſome accompts thoſe benefits with greater advantage might accrue to them by the gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate preſence; that it by internal operation could more clearly inform the mind, more ſtrongly incline the will, more vigorouſly affect the heart, than any exteriour word or example could do: neither could our *Saviour*, according to the condition of his humanity, limited to particularities of time and place, ſo perfectly correſpond to the various exigencies of mankind; as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately preſent to, uniformly diffuſed through all things: him therefore did our Saviour leave the guardian of his otherwiſe *Orphan* diſciples; him did he ſubſtitute to undergo the care and tuition of them; to conduct them in the right way, to preſerve them from dangers, to comfort them in diſtreſſes, to manage all their concernments, to be their counſellour, monitour, advocate and patron; by him he meant fully to make good his word, *that he would be with them till the end of this world.*

Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς. John 14. 18.

Ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. Matt. 28. 20.

But more diſtinctly to ſurvey the many benefits and advantages proceeding from this excellent gift unto us, we may obſerve, that on it the foundation, the improvement, the completion of all our good and happineſs do depend; that to the *Holy Spirit* in truth and juſtice are to be aſcribed, 1. Our better ſtate and being. 2. Our ſpiritual powers and abilities. 3. Our good and acceptable performances; whatever we are, whatever we can do, whatever we actually do perform as Chriſtians.

1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our ſpiritual ſtate and being; our ſpiritual life, our freedom, our honourable condition.

Πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν. 1 Cor. 15. 45. John 6. 63. 2 Cor. 3. 36. Eph. 2. 1, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 23.

It is by virtue of this *quickning Spirit* that from death and corruption we are raiſed to an immortal and indefectible ſtate of life; that (as St. *Paul* ſaith) we that were *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins are quickned together with Chriſt*; we by this *incorruptible ſeed are born again*, not as formerly to a life of vanity and miſery, or to the enjoyment of a few tranſitory delights, tempered with many vexatious inconveniences, pains and troubles; but to ſure capacities of moſt ſolid and durable contentment, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reſerved in heaven for us.* 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

It is thereby we are free-men, enjoying a true and perfect liberty; being enfranchiſed from divers intolerable ſlaveries, to which we naturally are ſubjected, and from which otherwiſe we could not be exempted; from the dominion of a rigorous law, which preſcribeth hard duties, but doth not afford ſtrength to perform them; apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous accuſations of a guilty conſcience, with anxious fears of puniſhment, that *ſpirit of bondage unto fear*, of which St. *Paul* ſpeaketh; from the tyranny of a moſt crafty, ſpiteful and cruel enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate us at his pleaſure*, and detained us under his power; from the no leſs unjuſt, no leſs miſchievous domination of our own fleſh, or natural concupiſcence, impoſing grievous tasks and deſtructive neceſſities upon us; *It is* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, which ſetteth us free from theſe laws of ſin and of death*; ſo that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

Gal. 4. 24. *Lex os omnium potuit obſtruere, non potuit mentem convertere.* Ambr. Rom. 8. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Eph. 2. 2. Rom. 8. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 17.

From ſuch baſe thraldoms we thereby are redeemed, and not only ſo, but are advanc'd to an honourable condition, are ennobled with illuſtrious relations, are entitled to glorious privileges: all the benefits and immunities contained in the charter of the *new Jeruſalem*, all the advantages and privileges

privileges appropriated to God's Court and Family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father* and are thence *no more ſtrangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the Saints, and of the houſhold of God:* by this *holy unction* we are conſecrated *Kings and Prieſts unto God*; by participation of this *immortal ſeed*, we are engrafted into alliance with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren of Chriſt, heirs of paradiſe (an infinitely better paradiſe than that, from which we formerly were excluded;) for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, that Spirit, which conſtituteth us the Sons of God, qualifying us to be ſo by diſpoſitions reſembling God, and filial affections toward him; certifying us that we are ſo, and cauſing us by a free inſtinct *to cry Abba Father*, running into his boſome of love, and flying under the wings of his mercy in all our needs and diſtreſſes; whence *as many as are led by the Spirit, they* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *are the Sons of God*; and, *the Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit that we are the children of God*; yea, which may ſeem yet a farther pitch of dignity, we, by intervention of this Spirit, are united and incorporated into *Chriſt* himſelf, being made living members of his body, partaking a common life and ſenſe with him; by it we are compacted into the ſame ſpiritual edifice, dedicated to the worſhip and inhabitation of God; our bodies and ſouls are made temples of his divinity, thrones of his majeſty, orbs of his celeſtial light, paradiſes of his bliſsful preſence; for, *In whom* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ye are built together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit*; and, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

Eph. 2. 18, 19. Rev. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Rom. 8. 15. John 1. 13. Gal 4. 6. Rom. 8. 14. Rom. 8. 16. Eph. 2. 26. 1 Cor. 3. 16

By the *Holy Spirit* we are enſtated in theſe unconceivably glorious privileges, and by it onely we are aſſured of them, to our comfort; the gift of it as it is a great part of them, and the chief cauſe, ſo it is a ſure confirmation and pledge; Ye, ſaith St. *Paul*, *were ſealed by the Holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance*; and *It is God who did eſtabliſh us with you in Chriſt, and anointed us, and alſo ſealed us, and gave the earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts*; all which phraſes do import the ſame thing, that is, a comfortable aſſurance concerning the reality of the benefits by divine grace exhibited and promiſed to us.

Eph. 1. 13. Rom. 8. 9, 11. 2 Cor. 1. 21.

2. Neither only relatively and extrinſecally is our ſtate bettered and exalted from death to life, from ſlavery to freedom, from baſeneſs to dignity; but our ſelves anſwerably are changed, and amended by the ſame *Holy Spirit*, with a real and intrinſecal alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former natural ſtate; by that *renovation of the Holy Ghoſt*, of which St. *Paul* ſpeaketh, we are (ſaith *he*) *renewed in the Spirit of our mind*; ſo that not onely the decayed frame of our ſoul is thereby repaired, and reformed, but its powers are much improved and inlarged; we are thence endowed with new and better faculties, as it were; with quicker apprehenſions, with ſincerer judgments, with righter inclinations, with nobler paſſions, than we had before (yea than we could have had in our original ſtate;) ſo that in the language of *Holy Scripture* we thence become *new men*, and *new creatures, created according to God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*; according to God, that is in conformity to the divine perfections of rectitude in mind and will, ſo as to reſemble God in a higher degree, and more worthy reſpects than formerly. Our Father *Adam* was made εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν, a creature endowed with life and ſenſe, furniſhed with powers and appetites diſpoſing to acquire, preſerve and enjoy the conveniences agreeable to that frame; and we naturally are ψυχικὶ ἄνθρωποι, *animal,*

2 Cor. 5. 17. Tit. 3. 5. Eph. 4. 23. Eph. 4. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Col. 3. 10. Eph. 4. 23. 2. 10. Col. 3. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 45. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

mal men; such as naturally do apprehend, do affect, do pursue things concerning this present life; the pleasures of sense, and the satisfactions of fancy; freedom from want and pain, security from danger and disturbance, together with the means we suppose conducible to those, wealth, honour and power; these are those *desires of the flesh and of the mind*, the things which according to our natural temper and frame we like and approve; which most men therefore do highly value, passionately love, and earnestly seek: Nor doth nature only incline us to a complacence in these things, but customary fruition greatly endeareth them to us; so that we continually improve our acquaintance, and contract a firmer alliance with them; but spiritual and divine things (*the things of the Spirit of God*, as St. *Paul* calleth them) we cannot * *receive*, that is, simply of our selves, without aid of another interiour principle, we have no capacity to apprehend them, no disposition to entertain them, no strength to pursue them; they (as the *Apostle* saith) *are foolishness to us*, that is, incongruous to our prejudicate notions, and insipid to our corrupt palates.

Θελήματα σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν. Eph. 2. 3.

Τὰ τῦ πνεύματος τῦ θεῦ. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

*Δέχεσθαι.

Such doctrines as these; that our felicity consisteth not in affluence of temporal enjoyments, but in dispositions of soul crossing our humours, curbing our appetites, and quelling our passions; in conformity of practice to rules distastful to our sense; in the love and favour of an invisible Being: in reversion of an estate not to be possessed until after our death in another world; that none of these present things do well deserve our serious regard, affection or care, and that it is blamable to be sollicitous about them; that naked goodness (how low, weak and poor soever) is to be chosen before all the specious pomps and glories of this world; that the secret testimony of conscience is to be preferred before all the approbation and applause of men; that the hope of future joy should oversway the desire of present most certain and sensible delights; that the loss of all things may sometime be deemed our greatest gain, being contemned our highest honour, enduring afflictions our most desirable condition, death our surest welfare, a cross preferrible to a crown; that accordingly it is often advantageous and expedient for us, and a duty incumbent on us willingly to discard our dearest contents of life, to sacrifice our most valued interests, to forsake our nearest relations, to refuse what we most affect, to undertake what we most distast, to undergo without reluctancy or regret the most bitter accidents that can befall us; that we must (to use the *holy style*) *hate our own souls, deny our selves, and take up our cross, quit houses and lands, desert kindred and friends*; ἀποτάσσεσθαι πᾶσι τοῖς ἑαυτῦ ὑπάρχουσι *to renounce* (or bid farewel) *to all that he hath*, or owneth; *cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes; circumcise our hearts, mortifie our members; crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts; be crucified to the world*; to *accompt all* worldly *things damage*, dross, and *dung* in comparison to spiritual goods. That we must so far remit and restrain our self-love, as to love all men, not excluding our greatest enemies, as our selves; so as not only to part freely with our particular accommodations, but upon occasion, in imitation of our Saviour, to *lay down our lives for them*; so as not only to comport with their infirmities, but to requite their extremest injuries with good will and good turns; so as to do all good to all men, to return no evil to any; *to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.*

John 12. 25. Luke 14. 26. 2. 13. Luke 14. 33. Matt. 16. 24. 5. 29. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24. 6. 14. Rom. 6. 6. Phil. 3. 7, 8.

Matt. 6. 44.

These, and such like dictates of the Spirit are *hard*, and harsh sayings, absurd to our natural conceit, and abominable to our carnal humour; we cannot readily swallow them, we cannot easily digest them; in respect to them

John 6. 60.

them we as mere men are ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *enemies in our mind*, or reaſon; our diſcourſe preſently doth contradict and oppoſe them: Our reaſon is ſhut up, and barr'd with various appetites, humours and paſſions againſt ſuch truths, nor can we admit them into our hearts, except God by his Spirit do *ſet open our mind*, and work a free paſſage for them into us; it is *he who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs*, muſt as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) *illuſtrate our hearts with the knowledge* of theſe things; an *Unction from the holy one*, clearing our eyes, ſoftning our hearts, healing our diſtempered faculties muſt (as St. *John* informeth us) *teach* and perſuade us this ſort of truths; a hearty faith of theſe ſeemingly incredible propoſitions muſt indeed be, as St. *Paul* calleth it, *the gift of God*, proceeding from that *Spirit of faith*, whereof the ſame *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh; ſuch faith is not (as St. *Baſil* ſaith) *engendred by Geometrical neceſſities, but by the effectual operations of the Holy Ghoſt*: *Fleſh and bloud will not reveal unto us, nor can any man* with clear confidence *ſay, that Jeſus* (the Authour, Maſter and Exemplifier of theſe doctrines) *is the Lord*, (the *Meſſias*, the infallible Prophet, the univerſal Law-giver, the Son of the living God) *but by the Holy Ghoſt*: *Every Spirit, which* ſincerely *confeſſeth him to be the Chriſt*, who hath enjoyned theſe Precepts, we may with St. *John* ſafely conclude to *be of God*; for of our ſelves *we are not ſufficient* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) λογίζεσθαί τι, *to reaſon out*, or collect any of theſe things; we never of our own accord, without divine attraction ſhould *come unto Chriſt*, that is ſhould effectually conſent unto, and embrace his inſtitution, conſiſting of ſuch unplauſible Propoſitions, and Precepts; hardly would his own Diſciples, who had ſo long enjoyed the light of his inſtruction and converſation, have admitted it, if he had not granted to them that *Spirit of truth*, whoſe work it was ὁδηγῆσαι, to lead them in this unknown and uncouth way, ἀναγγέλλειν, to tell them again and again, that is, to inſtill and inculcate theſe crabbid truths upon them, ὑπομιμνήσκειν, to admoniſh, excite and urge them to the marking and minding them; hardly, I ſay, without the guidance of this Spirit would our Lord's Diſciples have admitted divers Evangelical truths, as our Lord himſelf told them; *I have* (ſaid he) *many things beſide to ſay to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them*; *but when he, the Spirit of truth ſhall come, he ſhall conduct you into all truth.*

Col. 1. 21.

Διανοίγειν τὸν νοῦν. Luke 24. 45. Acts 16. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

1 John 2. 27.

Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Cor. 12. 9. Πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως. 2 Cor. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 9. Πίστις ἐκ τῶν γεωμετρικαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ πνεύματος ἐνεργείας ἐγγινομένη. Baſ. *in* Pſ. 115. Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 3.

1 John 4. 2. 2 Cor. 3, 5.

John 6. 44. John 16. 13. 14. 26.

John 16. 12.

As for the mighty *Sages* of the world, the learned *Scribes*, the ſubtile *diſputers*, the deep politicians, the *wiſe men according to the fleſh*, the men of moſt refined judgment, and improved reaſon in the world's eye, they were more ready to deride, than to regard, to impugn, than to admit theſe doctrines; to the *Greeks who ſought wiſdom*, the preaching of them did ſeem *fooliſhneſs*.

1 Cor. 1. 20. &c.

It is true ſome few ſparks or flaſhes of this divine knowledge may poſſibly be driven out by rational conſideration; *Philoſophy* may yield ſome twilight glimmerings thereof; common reaſon may dictate a faint conſent unto, may produce a cold tendency after ſome of theſe things; but a clear perception, and a reſolute perſuaſion of mind, that *full aſſurance of faith*, and *inflexible confeſſion of hope*: which the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaketh of; that *all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding*, that *abundant knowledge of the divine will in all ſpiritual wiſdom and underſtanding*, with which St. *Paul* did pray that his *Coloſſians* might *be repleniſhed*; theſe ſo perfect illuſtrations

Πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως. Heb. 10. 22. Ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινής. Heb. 10. 23.

Πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως. Col. 2. 2. Col. 1. 9.

ons of the mind, ſo powerful convictions of the heart do argue immediate influences from the fountain of life and wiſdom, the divine Spirit: no external inſtruction could infuſe, no interiour diſcourſe could excite them; could penetrate thoſe opacities of ignorance, and diſſipate thoſe thick miſts of prejudice, wherein nature and cuſtom do involve us; could ſo thoroughly awaken the lethargick ſtupidity of our ſouls; could ſupple the refractary ſtiffneſs of our wills, could mollify the ſtony hardneſs of our hearts, could void our natural averſation to ſuch things, and quell that

Rom. 8. 7. φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *that carnal mind*, the which St. *Paul* ſaith *is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*;

2Cor. 10. 4, 5. could depreſs thoſe ὑψώματα, thoſe *lofty towers* of ſelf-conceit, *reared againſt the knowledge of God*, and *demoliſh* thoſe ὀχυρώματα, thoſe *bulwarks* of ſelf-will and perverſe ſtomach oppoſed againſt the impreſſions of divine truth; and *captivate* πᾶν νόημα, *every conceit* and device of ours *to the obedience of Chriſt*, and his diſcipline: Well therefore did St. *Paul* pray in

Eph. 1. 17. behalf of his *Epheſians*, that *God would beſtow on them that Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the acknowledgment of him, and that the eyes of their mind*

Τῆς διανοίας. (or reaſon) *might be enlightned, ſo as to know the hope of their calling*; that is, to underſtand and believe the doctrines of Chriſtianity, which upon condition of obedience did promiſe felicity to them.

So is the light of ſpiritual knowledge, together with a temper of mind diſpoſing to receive it, communicated to us; but farther alſo by the ſame divine power and ſpirit are our vital heat and vigour, our active ſtrength and courage imparted. For as mere men we are not only blind to diſcern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the neceſſary duties of vertue and piety, but we are alſo dead, heartleſs and unwieldy, lame and impotent, indiſpoſed and uncapable to perform them: though we ſhould competently apprehend our duty, and our *ſpirit* thence ſhould be

Matt. 26. 41. *willing*, yet *our fleſh*, or natural power, *is weak*; we may (as St. *Paul* inſtructeth us) in our judgment conſent that *the law is holy, juſt and good*; and conſequently *to will may be preſent to us*; that is, we may be deſirous, and in ſome meaſure reſolved to obey it; yea we may *have ſome interiour rational complacence therein*; and yet not have ability to act according to theſe dictates and deſires; for *to will is preſent to me* (ſaith he in the perſon of a man endewed only with natural ſtrength, abſtracting from the ſubſidiary vir-

Rom. 7. 12, 16. Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.

Rom. 7. 18. Συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον. Rom. 7. 22.

Rom. 7. 18. Τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐχ εὑρίσκω.

tue and operation of the divine Spirit,) *but to perform that which is good, I find not*; I perceive not any means, or way of affecting it; knowledge therefore and willingneſs to do good doth not ſuffice; we need a prevalent force to ſtir and raiſe this unweildy bulk; to overpoiſe our natural propenſions, to ſubdue the reluctancies, and check the importunities of ſence, to correct bad nature, and reclaim from bad cuſtom: The natural might and policy of our ſingle reaſon, being very feeble and ſhallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent confederacy of enemies, which continually with open violence doth invade and aſſail us; or which by clandeſtine wiles doth watch to circumvent and ſupplant us: Is it eaſie for us not to dread the frowns, nor to be charmed by the flatteries; to ſlight both the hatred and favour; to abide the perſecutions, and to avoid the allurements of this world; this wicked, violent, deceitful world, which is ever ready to deter from good, and entice us to evil? Is it eaſie to reſtrain and repreſs thoſe *fleſhly luſts, which* (as St. *Peter* ſaith)

1 Pet. 2. 11. James 4. 1. *do war againſt our ſouls*, combating them with their own forces; uſing their own faculties and members as weapons againſt them? Is it eaſie to reſcue

reſcue our ſelves from that *other law in our members, that warreth againſt the law of our underſtanding, and captivateth us to the law of ſin?* Is it a ſmall matter to ſet upon, to grapple with, to knock down that Gigantick-*Philiſtine*, inordinate ſelf-love (the root of injuſtice, pride, envy, malice, ambition and avarice within us) which naturally is ſo tall and ſtout; which, if not checked in its progreſs, will daily grow in ſtature and ſtrength? Is it a ſlight buſineſs to detect, to counterplot, to decline or defeat thoſe μεθοδείας, thoſe *devices*, or *ſubtile trains*, and ſleights of the Tempter; *to wreſtle with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this darkſome world, with the ſpiritualities of wickedneſs*, ſurrounding us? may we not reaſonably in compariſon to theſe mighty *Anakim* be (as the children of *Iſrael* anciently were) *in our own ſight as Graſhoppers*, quite deſpairing by our own ſtrength to vanquiſh, to reſiſt them?

Rom. 7. 23. Eph. 6. 11. Ἡμῖν ἡ πάλη. Eph. 6. 12. Num. 13. 33.

In our ſpiritual conflict with ſuch dangerous and dreadful adverſaries, we do need an ἐπιχορηγία τῦ πνεύμα]Θ, (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh, that is) *a large ſupply of the Spirit*, a collation of auxiliary forces, an habitual ſupport derived from that invincible and infallible ſpirit, which only is ſtronger, and wiſer than they; we need to be armed with that δύναμις ἐξ ὕψους, that *power from on high*, or heavenly might, whereby the *Apoſtles* were enabled to fight their noble battles, and to atchieve their glorious conqueſts, ſubduing the rebellious world, and baffling the powers of darkneſs; we need δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι, *to be ſtrengthened with might by Chriſt's ſpirit in the inward man*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it; whereby, as he, we may πάντα ἰσχύειν, be *able to do all things*, or to accompliſh the moſt difficult parts of our duty; without which *we can do nothing*, that is, cannot diſcharge the moſt eaſie things required of us; *all our ſufficiency is of God*; it is he, who *out of his goodneſs doth effect in us both to will and to perform*; his ſpirit *taking part with our infirmities*, and thereby giving us advantage over all oppoſition and difficulty. The chief reaſon why we *do not ſin*, or perſiſt in a courſe of diſobedience to the Laws of God, is, as St. *John* telleth us, *becauſe the divine ſeed abideth in us*, that root of divine life, and vital activity implanted in us by the Holy Spirit; that *divine nature* (as St. *Peter* ſtyleth it) that principle and ſpring of ſpiritual motion by him inſerted in us; from which only *ſeed* or *nature* do ſprout all heavenly graces and vertues.

Phil. 1. 19. Luke 24. 49. (Eſa. 59. 19.) Eph. 3. 16. Col. 1. 11. Phil. 4. 13. John 15. 5.

2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13. Col. 1. 12. Τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται τῶ ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν——Rom. 8. 26.

1 John 3. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 23.

1 Pet. 2. 4. Θεία φύσις. *Vis divinæ gratiæ, potentior utique natura.* Tertull.

The principal and original virtue, charity (*the root, the fountain, the mother of all goodneſs*, as Saint *Chryſoſtome* calleth it) even that *ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us*, as St. *Paul* telleth us; and *the fruit* (ſaith he) *of the Spirit is in all goodneſs, righteouſneſs and truth*; and, *Love, peace, long-ſuffering, benignity, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance* are by the ſame divine *Apoſtle* reckoned ſtreams from the ſame ſource, fruits of the ſame rich and goodly ſtock: to it generally are attributed all purification of our hearts, mortification of our luſts, ſanctification of our lives, and conſequently ſalvation of our ſouls: *Ye* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *are waſhed, ye are ſanctified, ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God*; and, *God hath choſen us from the beginning to ſalvation by ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*; and, *Having* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *purified our ſouls in obedience to the truth, by the Spirit, unto charity unfeigned*; and, *If* (ſaith St. *Paul* again) *by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the Fleſh, ye ſhall live*; Thus doth our ſpiritual being and ſtate, toge-

Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπαλλαγῆναι ἄνευ τῦ τῦ πνεύμα]Θ ἐνεργείας. Chryſ. Ῥίζα, καὶ πηγὴ, καὶ μήτηρ ἁπάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Chryſ.

Rom. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 9. Gal. 5. 22. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Theſ. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 22. Rom. 8. 13.

ther with our life and active powers depend upon the *Holy Spirit*; and not only ſo, but

3. The continued ſubſtance and preſervation, the actual uſe and exerciſe of them, all our diſcreet conduct, all our good practice do rely upon him: It is true of our ſpiritual no leſs than of our natural life. *If he doth avert his face, we are troubled*; *if he doth ſubſtract his influence, we die and return unto our duſt*: upon all occaſions we do need his direction, aid and comfort; for *the way of man* (as the *Prophet* ſaith) *is not in himſelf*, *it is not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*; *It is the Lord* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *that ordereth the ſteps of a good man, and upholdeth him with his hand*; we have all need to pray with that good man; *Cauſe me to know the way, wherein I ſhould walk*; *teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God*; *thy ſpirit is good, lead me into the Land of uprightneſs.*

Pſal. 104. 29. Jer. 10. 23. Pſal. 37. 23. Pſal. 143. 8. 10.

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions, fickle and irreſolute in our purpoſes, ſlow and heavy in our proceedings; apt to faint and faulter, to ſtumble and ſlip in all our practice; we do need therefore this ſure Oracle to conſult in our doubts and darkneſſes; this faithful friend to direct and adviſe us in our affairs; this conſtant Monitor to rouſe, and quicken us in our undertakings; this powerful Guardian to ſupport and eſtabliſh us in our ways; It is, in reſpect to good men, this ſteady hand that holdeth the helm, and gently ſteereth their courſe through the blind tracts of religious practice; withdrawing them from thoſe dangerous ſhelves of errour and temptation, upon which they are apt to ſplit; it is this heavenly gale, that filleth their ſails with conſtant reſolution, and fairly driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliſs. He ſoftly doth whiſper and inſinuate good thoughts into us; doth kindle pious deſires, doth cheriſh virtuous intentions, doth promote honeſt endeavours; he ſeaſonably checketh and reſtraineth us from ſin; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it; he raiſeth wholſome remorſe, ſhame and diſpleaſure for our unworthineſs and folly; He ſweetly warmeth our cold affections, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God; he qualifieth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confidence, prompting us fit matter of requeſt, becoming our advocate and interceſſour for the good ſucceſs of our prayers; *Through Chriſt Jeſus* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we have acceſs by one ſpirit unto the Father*; and, *The ſpirit helpeth our infirmities*; *for we know not what we ſhould ask for as we ought, but the ſpirit it ſelf intercedeth for us.*

Eph. 2. 18. Rom. 8. 26.

He guardeth us, he ſtandeth us, he ſuſtaineth by us in all trials, and temptations, affording *grace ſufficient* to eſcape or to endure them; *not ſuffering us to be tempted above what we are able.*

2 Cor. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

He ſupporteth and comforteth us in our afflictions and diſtreſſes of all kinds, of our inward and outward eſtate: this *David* knew when in his penitential agonies he prayed, *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me*; *reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit*; this thoſe *firſt Chriſtians* felt, who under perſecutions and all outward diſcouragements were yet *filled with joy*, and *did walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*; whence that teſtimony of St. *Paul* concerning the *Theſſalonians*; *Ye were followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghoſt*; by it the bleſſed *Saints, Martyrs* and *Confeſſors* being inſpired did not only with admirable patience, but incredible alacrity undergo the extremeſt loſſes, ignominies and tortures which the ſpite of hell, and rage of the world could inflict on them.

Pſal. 51. 12. Acts 13. 14. 9. 31, &c. 1 Theſ. 1. 6.

It is in fine, this Holy Spirt, which is the ſole Author and ſpring of all true delight, of all real content within us; of that *unſpeakable joy in believing*, that *gayety of hope*, that ſatisfaction in well doing; the partaking of his ſociety, influence and conſolation is indeed the moſt delicious repaſt, and richeſt cordial of our ſoul; the neareſt reſemblance, the ſweeteſt foretaſt of Paradiſe. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Heb. 3. 6.

So many, ſo great; yea far more, far greater than, ſhould the time give me leave, I could enumerate or expreſs, are the benefits accruing to us from this moſt excellent gift of God, by him graciouſly conferred upon all good Chriſtians; for which we ſhould correſpondently endeavour with all our hearts to praiſe, and thank him; in all our lives to make grateful and worthy returns for it; eſpecially by well uſing it to the greateſt purpoſes, for which it was beſtowed, of enabling us to ſerve God, of preſerving us from ſin, of conducting us to eternal ſalvation.

Let us earneſtly invite this Holy gueſt unto us, by our Prayers unto him, who hath promiſed to beſtow his Spirit upon thoſe, which ask it; to impart *this living* ſtream to every one, which *thirſteth* after it; let us willingly receive him into our hearts, let us treat him with all kind uſage, with all humble obſervance. Let us not exclude him by ſupine neglect, or rude *reſiſtance*; let us not *grieve* him by our perverſe and froward behaviour toward him: let us not *tempt him* by our fond preſumptions, or baſe treacheries; let us not *quench* his heavenly light and heat by our foul luſts and paſſions: But let us admit gladly his gentle illapſes; let us hearken to his faithful ſuggeſtions; let us comply with his kindly motions; let us demean our ſelves modeſtly, conſiſtently, and officiouſly toward him; that we may ſo do, God of his infinite mercy grant unto us, through *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; to whom with the ſame *Holy Spirit* for ever be all glory, and praiſe. *Amen.* Luke 11. 33. John 7. 37, 38, 39. Acts 7. 51. Eph. 4. 30. Iſa. 63. 10. Acts 5. 9. 1 Theſ. 5. 19.

O God the ſtrength of all them, that put their truſt in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and becauſe through the weakneſs of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may pleaſe thee both in will and deed, through Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen.

SER-

A DEFENCE OF THE B. TRINITY.

Trinity Sunday, 1663.

Φύσει μὲν ἄτρεπτος λόγος σταθερὸς καὶ εὐκίνητος, καὶ διὰ τὴν ἀντιμαχόμενον λόγον ἐλευθερίαν ὀκνῶν ἔχων· ὃ δὲ θεὸς τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον, ὅσῳ μεῖζον τὸ ὑπομένομον, καὶ ὁ ζῆλος πλείων, καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος χαλεπώτερος· καὶ γὰρ νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, καὶ ἑρμηνεῦσαι ἀμήχανον, καὶ ἀκοῆς πεπαιδαρμένης ὕστερον ἐφικέσθαι. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 26.

COL. III. 2.

Set your Affections on things above.

Φρονεῖτε τὰ ἄνω.

FOR understanding this Apostolical Precept, two Particulars must be considered; first the Act, φρονεῖν (which is rendred to *set our Affections*) then the Object, τὰ ἄνω, *things above*; these we briefly shall explain.

The word φρονεῖν doth primarily, and also according to common use, denote an advertency, or intent application of the mind upon any Object: Of the mind, that is, of a man's Soul, especially of its rational part; so as to include the powers of Understanding, Will, Affection, Activity; whence it may imply direction of our Understanding to know; of our Will to chuse and embrace; of our Affection to love, desire, relish; of our Activity to pursue any good (real or apparent) which is proposed: according to which most comprehensive sense (suting the nature of the thing) I do take the word, supposing that St. *Paul* doth enjoin us to employ all our mental Faculties in study, choice, passion, endeavour upon supernal things.

The τὰ ἄνω (things above) may be so taken, as to import all things relating to our spiritual Life here, or our future state hereafter; the which do either actually subsist above in Heaven, or have a final reference thither: so they may comprize, 1. The substantial Beings, to whom we stand related, owe respect, perform duty. 2. The state

and condition of our ſpiritual Life here, or hereafter, as we are Servants and Subjects of God, Citizens of Heaven, Candidates of Immortal Happineſs. 3. Rules to be obſerved, Qualities to be acquired, Actions to be performed, Means to be uſed by us in regard to the ſuperior Place and State.

Of theſe things the incomparably Principal and Supream, the τὸ ὑπερέχον, is the ever moſt Glorious and Bleſſed Trinity; to the minding of which this Day is peculiarly dedicated, and the which indeed is always the moſt excellent, moſt beneficial, moſt comfortable Object of our Contemplation and Affection; wherefore upon it I ſhall now immediately fix my Diſcourſe.

The Sacred Trinity may be conſidered, either as it is in it ſelf wrapt up in unexplicable folds of Myſtery; or as it hath diſcovered it ſelf operating in wonderful methods of Grace towards us.

As it is in it ſelf, 'tis an Object too bright and dazling for our weak Eye to faſten upon, an Abyſs too deep for our ſhort Reaſon to fathom; I can only ſay, That we are ſo bound to mind it, as to exerciſe our Faith, and expreſs our Humility, in willingly believing, in ſubmiſſively adoring thoſe high Myſteries which are revealed in the Holy Oracles concerning it, by that Spirit it ſelf, *which ſearcheth the Depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who reſiding in his Father's Boſom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them* to us, ſo far as was fit for our capacity and uſe: And the Lectures ſo read by the Eternal *Wiſdom of God*, the Propoſitions uttered by the Mouth of *Truth it ſelf*, we are obliged with a docile Ear, and a credulous Heart, to entertain.

Ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο. Joh. 1. 18.

That there is one Divine Nature or Eſſence, common unto Three Perſons incomprehenſibly united, and ineffably diſtinguiſhed; united in Eſſential Attributes, diſtinguiſhed by peculiar Idioms and Relations; all equally infinite in every Divine Perfection, each different from other in order and manner of ſubſiſtence; that there is a mutual inexiſtence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the Communicant; an Eternal Generation, and an Eternal Proceſſion, without precedence or ſucceſſion, without proper cauſality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's Life, and a Spirit iſſuing from both, without any diviſion, or multiplication of Eſſence: theſe are Notions which may well puzzle our Reaſon in conceiving how they agree, but ſhould not ſtagger our Faith in aſſenting that they are true; upon which we ſhould meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with diſpoſition to admire, veiling our Faces in the preſence, and proſtrating our Reaſon at the feet of Wiſdom ſo far tranſcending us.

Joh. 10. 38. 14. 10. 17. 21.

There be thoſe, who, becauſe they cannot untie, dare to cut in ſunder theſe ſacred Knots; who, becauſe they cannot fully conceive it, dare flatly to deny them; who, inſtead of confeſſing their own infirmity, do charge the plain Doctrins and Aſſertions of Holy Scripture with impoſſibility. Others ſeem to think they can demonſtrate theſe Myſteries by Arguments grounded upon Principles of natural Light; and expreſs it by Similitudes derived from common Experience. To repreſs the Preſumption of the former, and to reſtrain the Curioſity of the latter, the following Conſiderations (improved by your Thoughts) may perhaps ſomewhat conduce.

1. We

1. We may conſider, that our Reaſon is no competent or capable Judg concerning Propoſitions of this nature: *Our Breaſt* (as *Minutius* ſpeaketh) *is a narrow Veſſel, that will not hold much Underſtanding*; 'tis not ſufficient, nor was ever deſigned to ſound ſuch depths, to deſcry the radical Principles of all Being, to reach the extreme poſſibilities of things. Such an intellectual Capacity is vouchſafed to us as doth ſute to our degree (the loweſt Rank of Intelligent Creatures) as becometh our Station in this inferiour part of the World, as may qualify us to diſcharge the petty Buſineſſes committed to our management, and the facile Duties incumbent on us: but to know what God is, how he ſubſiſteth, what he can, what he ſhould do, by our natural perſpicacity, or by any means we can uſe, farther than he pleaſeth to reveal, doth not ſute to the meanneſs of our Condition, or the narrowneſs of our Capacity; theſe really are the moſt elevated Sublimities, and the abſtruſeſt Subtilties that are, or can be in the nature of things; he that can penetrate them, may erect his Tribunal any where in the World, and pretend juſtly that nothing in Heaven or Earth is exempted from his Judgment: But in truth, how unfit our Reaſon is to exerciſe ſuch univerſal Juriſdiction, we may diſcern by comparing it to our Senſe; it is obvious that many Beaſts do (by advantage of a finer Senſe) ſee, hear, ſmell things imperceptible to us; and were it not very unreaſonable to conclude that ſuch things do not exiſt, or are in themſelves altogether inſenſible, becauſe they do not at all appear to us? Is it not evident, that we ought to impute their imperceptibility (reſpecting us) to the defect of our Senſe, to its dulneſs and groſſneſs, in regard to the ſubtilty of thoſe Objects? Even ſo may Propoſitions in themſelves, and in regard to the capacity of higher Underſtandings (for there are gradual differences in Underſtanding, as well as in Senſe) be true and very intelligible, which to our inferior Reaſon ſeem unintelligible, or repugnant to the Prenotions with which our Soul is imbued; and our not diſcerning thoſe Truths, may argue the blindneſs and weakneſs of our Underſtanding, not any fault or inconſiſtency in the things themſelves; nor ſhould it cauſe us any wiſe to diſtruſt them, if they come recommended to our belief by competent Authority.

Nobis ad intellectum pectus anguſtum eſt, &c. Min. F.

Τὸν μὲν δὴ ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τῆσδε τῆς παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν. Plato *in* Tim.

To ſuch purpoſes indeed the Holy Scripture frequently doth vilify our Reaſon and Knowledg: *Every man* (ſaith *Jeremiah*) *is brutiſh in knowledg. The Lord* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *knoweth the thoughts of men* (*of wiſe men*, as St. *Paul* quoteth it) *that they are vanity. Vain man* (ſaith he in *Job*) *would be wiſe, tho man be born like a wild Aſſes Colt*; (that is, however we affect to ſeem wiſe, yet to be dull as an Aſs, to be wild as a Colt, is natural to us.) *My thoughts* (ſaith God in the Prophet) *are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* God's Wiſdom is as the Heavens, the higheſt and top of all Wiſdom; Man's as the Earth, beneath which there is no degree, but that of Hell and Darkneſs: We therefore in this reſpect are unfit to determine concerning things ſo exceedingly ſublime and ſubtile.

Jer. 10. 14. Pſal. 103. 14. 1 Cor. 3. 10. Job 11. 12. Iſa. 55. 8.

2. We may conſider, that not only the imperfection of our Reaſon it ſelf, but the manner of uſing it doth incapacitate us to judg about theſe matters. Had we competent skill to ſail in this deep Ocean, yet we do want a Gale to drive us, and a Compaſs to ſteer our Courſe by therein; we have not any firm grounds to build our Judgment on, or certain Rules to ſquare it by. We cannot effectually diſcourſe or de-

termine upon any Subject, without having Principles homogeneous and
Annal. I. 7. pertinent thereto (that are ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ συγγενείᾳ, cognate and congruous to the Subject-matter, as the Philoſopher ſpeaketh) upon which to found our Argumentation. Now all the Principles we can have, are either originally innate to our Minds; or afterward immediately infuſed by God, or by external Inſtruction from him diſcloſed to us; or acquired by our Experience, and obſervation of things incurring our Senſe; or framed by our Reaſon, comparing thoſe means; of which the three former ſorts are moſt arbitrarily communicated, and both for number and kind depend upon the free pleaſure of him, who diſtri-
Ὡς ἑκάστῳ δεῖ ἐμέρισε μέτρον. Rom. 12. 3. buteth them according *to a meaſure* ſutable to each man's occaſions, eſtimated by himſelf: how many thoſe are, and how far they may qualify us to judg, or diſcourſe about thoſe tranſcendent Matters, is hard to define; but moſt certainly they never can claſh with one another; no Light in any manner imparted by God can obſcure the Doctrine declared by him, no Doctrine can thwart Principles inſtilled by him. The latter ſorts appertain only to material and ſenſible Objects; which therefore can only enable us to deduce, or to examine Concluſions relating to them; and being applied to things of another kind, are abuſed, ſo as to become apt to produce great miſtakes: As for inſtance, moſt Antient Philoſophers obſerving, that the Changes and Viciſſitudes in Nature were generally, by the ſame Matters, undergoing ſeveral Alterations, or putting on different Shapes; and that Bodies once being in reſt, did uſually conſiſt in that ſtate, until by impulſe of other Bodies they were put into motion, did thence frame ſuch Axioms, or Principles of Diſcourſe, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; and *Quicquid movetur, ab alio movetur*: which Propoſitions, ſuppoſing them true in relation to the preſent Conditions and Powers of ſenſible things, yet were it unlaw-
Id quod Deus eſt, ſecundum id quod eſt nec humano ſermone edici, nec humanis auribus percipi, nec humanis ſenſibus colligi poteſt. Novat. *de Trin.* cap. 7. ful to ſtretch them unto Beings of another kind and nature (to Beings immaterial and inſenſible,) or to infer thence generally, that in the utmoſt poſſibility of things there is not any creative, or any ſelf-motive Power: Even as from the like Premiſes it would be vain to conclude, that there be no other Beings ſubſiſtent beſide thoſe which ſtrike our Senſes, or diſcover themſelves by ſenſible Effects. In like manner, it cannot be reaſonable out of Principles drawn from ordinary Experience, about theſe moſt low and imperfect things, to collect, that there
Ὀνομάσαμεν δὲ, ὡς ἡμῖν ἐφικτὸν, ἐκ τῆς ἡμετέρων τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Naz. *Or.* 37. *de Sp. S.* can be no other kind of Unions, of Diſtinctions, of Generations, of Proceſſions, than ſuch as our own groſs Senſe doth repreſent to us: Reaſon it ſelf more forcibly doth oblige us to think that to ſublimer Beings there do pertain modes of Exiſtence and Action, Unions and Diſtinctions, Influences and Emanations of a more high and perfect kind, ſuch as our coarſe Apprehenſion cannot adequate, nor our rude Language expreſs; which we, perhaps, have no Faculty ſubtile enough to conceive diſtinctly, nor can attain any congruous Principles, from which to diſcourſe ſolidly about them: to judg of theſe things, if we will not againſt the Philoſopher's Rule, μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, *ſhift kinds*, or uſe improper and impertinent Arguments, we muſt *compare ſpiritual things with ſpiritual*, ſo as to draw Concluſions about Spirituals only from Principles revealed by God's Spirit, the ſole Maſter of Spiritual Science; ſo alſo as to expreſs them not ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, *in terms deviſed by human Wiſdom*, but in ſuch as the Holy Spirit hath ſuggeſt-

Cùm quæritur quid tres, magnâ inopiâ humanum laborat eloquium; dictum eſt tamen tres perſonæ, non ut illud diceretur, ſed nè taceretur. Aug. *de Trin.* 5. 9.

Κύριον ὄνομα τῆς νοητῆς καὶ ἀσωμάτων ἐστὶν. Naz. *Orat.* 45. (*ad* Evagr.)

1 Cor. 2. 13. Πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς συγκρίνειν.

ſuggeſted; for ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, a man endowed merely with common Senſe (or natural Reaſon) cannot δέχεσθαι, *apprehend*, or perceive thoſe *things of God, which only the Spirit of God doth know.* To improve and preſs which Conſideration farther,

3. We may conſider the weakneſs and ſhortneſs of our Reaſon, even about things moſt familiar and eaſy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmoſt diligence can attain to know concerning their intrinſick Eſſences, their Properties, their Cauſes and manners of production. What do we more commonly hear, than earneſt Complaints from the moſt induſtrious Searchers of natural Knowledg concerning the great obſcurity of Nature, the difficulty of finding Truth, the blindneſs of our Mind, and impotency of our Reaſon? And ſhould they be ſilent, yet Experience plainly would ſpeak how difficult, if not impoſſible, it is to arrive unto any clear and ſure knowledg of theſe common Objects; ſeeing the moſt ſedulous Inquiries, undertaken by the choiceſt Wits for above two thouſand Years, have ſcarce perhaps exhibited one unqueſtionable Theorem in Natural Philoſophy, one unexceptionable Maxim of Ethical Prudence or Policy; all things being ſtill expoſed to doubt and diſpute, as they were of old, when firſt Admiration and Curioſity did prompt men to hunt after the Cauſes of things; the moſt however that after all our care and toil we can perceive doth not exceed ſome faint Colours, ſome ſuperficial Figures, ſome groſs effects of things, while their radical Properties, and their immediate Cauſes remain inveloped, and debarred from our ſight in unacceſſable Darkneſs. Shall we then, who cannot pierce into the nature of a Peble, that cannot apprehend how a Muſhroom doth grow, that are baffled in our Philoſophy about a Gnat, or a Worm, debate and decide (beyond what is taught us from above) concerning the preciſe manner of Divine Eſſence, Subſiſtence, or Generation? *I do* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*) *eat Meats, but how they are divided into Flegm, into Blood, into Juice, into Choler, I am ignorant; theſe things which every day we ſee and taſte, we do not know; and are we curious about the Eſſence of God?* We are (as * *Ariſtotle* himſelf, no Dunce, no Idiot, doth confeſs) but *Owl-eyed*, πρὸς τὰ τῇ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων, *in regard to things naturally moſt evident*, and palpable; and can we be ſuch *Lynceus*'s, as to ſee through the fartheſt Receſſes of Infinity? *Hardly* (ſaith the *Wiſdom* of *Solomon*) *do we gueſs aright of things upon the earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath ſearched out?* Yea, and the genuine *Solomon* himſelf, *I ſaid I will be wiſe, but it was far from me; that which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* What is more remote, what more profound, than God's Nature, who then can find it out? ſooner with our hands may we touch the extreme ſurface of the Skies, ſooner with our Eyes may we pierce to the Center of the Earth: So it is expreſly told to us in *Job*; *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection? it is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper than hell, what canſt thou know?*

Κενέδω σοι τὸ φιλόπιμον ἐν ἀκινδύνοις. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.

Βρώματα ἐσθίω, τὸ δὲ πῶς μερίζονται εἰς φλέγμα, εἰς αἷμα, εἰς χυμὸν, εἰς χόλιν, ἀγνοῶ· ταῦτα δ' περιβλέπομεν καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἐσθίοντες ἀγνοοῦμεν, καὶ τῶν ὄντων τὸ θεῖον πολυπραγμονοῦμεν; Chryſ. Περὶ ἀκαταλήπτου. α.

* Ariſt. *Met.* 2. 1.

Sap. 9. 13.

Eccleſ. 7. 23.

Job 11. 7.

4. It may be conſidered, that we daily ſee and obſerve things, which, did not manifeſt Experience convince us of their being, we ſhould be apt to disbelieve their poſſibility; Senſe no leſs than Faith doth preſent

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us with Objects, to bare Reaſon improbable and unconceivable; ſo that ſhould we attend to the Scruples injected thereby, we ſhould hardly take things for poſſible, which we behold exiſtent; we ſhould diſtruſt the greateſt Evidence of Senſe, and by our Logick put out our Eyes. Who would believe, that, did he not every day ſee it; who can conceive how, altho he ſeeth it, from a little, dry, illfavoured, inſipid Seed thrown into the Earth, there ſhortly would riſe ſo goodly a Plant, endewed with ſo exact figure, ſo fragrant ſmell, ſo delicate taſte, ſo lively colour; by what Engines it attracteth, by what Diſcretion it culleth out, by what Hands it mouldeth its proper aliment; by what Artifice it doth elaborate the ſame ſo curiouſly, and incorporate it with it ſelf? What Virtue could we imagine in Nature able to digeſt an earthy Juice into the pellucid clearneſs of Chryſtal, into the invincible firmneſs of a Diamond? Who would not be an Infidel, did not his ſight aſſure him of the Miracles atchieved by that blind plaſtick force, which without Eye or Hand doth frame ſuch varieties of exquiſite Workmanſhip, unimitable, and far ſurpaſſing the skill of the greateſt Artiſt? That a little Star, from ſo vaſt a diſtance, in a moment, ſhould make impreſſion on our Eyes, repleniſhing with its Light or Image ſo ſpacious a Region all about it, were we blind we ſhould hardly believe, we ſcarce could fancy: How, without knowing the Organs of Speech, or the manner of applying them, without any care or pain imployed by us, we ſo conform our Voice, as to expreſs what Word, what Accent we pleaſe; how we do this, or that we can do it, as it will confound our Thought to imagine, ſo it would ſtagger our Faith to believe, did not our Conſcience perſuade us that we can, and do ſpeak. It is upon occaſion very commonly ſaid, I ſhould never have believed it, had I not ſeen it; and that men ſpeak ſo in earneſt, many ſuch Inſtances declare. Now if we can give credit to our Senſe againſt the ſuffrage or ſcruple of our Reaſon in things not ſo diſcoſted from our capacity of Knowledg, ſhall we not much more yield our Belief unto God's expreſs Word in things ſo infinitely diſtant from it? If common Experience can ſubdue our Judgments, and compel us to a belief of things incredible, ſhall our Reaſon demur at ſubmitting to Divine Authority? If the dictate of our Conſcience doth convince us,
1 John 3. 20. ſhall not we much more ſurrender to the Teſtimony of *God*, who *is greater than our Conſcience, and knoweth all things?* If we do believe, becauſe we ſeem to know by ſeeing our ſelves; we ſhould rather believe, becauſe we ſurely know by hearing from God: for Senſe may deceive, us, and often needeth correction from Reaſon; God cannot deceive, and Reaſon often is by him corrected: which leadeth me to a farther Conſideration, that

5. The Propoſitions clearly delivered unto us by God himſelf, are upon many accounts more unqueſtionably true, more credible than the Experiments of any Senſe, or Principles of any Science: whence if there happen to ariſe any ſeeming Conteſt between theſe, a precedence is due to the former, in derogation to the latter; it is fit that we rather give our Eyes and our Ears, our Fancies and our Reaſons the lie, than any wiſe, by diffidence to his Word, put an affront on God; (for to
1 Joh. 5. 10. disbelieve him, is, as St. *John* telleth us, to give him the lie.)
1 Cor. 1. 25. Τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the folly of God* (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh; that is, the Points of Faith declared by God, which ſeem moſt irrational, and croſs to the Decrees of Humane Wiſdom) is σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων,

wiſer

wiſer than men, that is, more aſſuredly conſonant to real Truth, than our moſt undoubted Theorems of Science, and moſt current Maxims of Policy. God is the *Father of all Lights*, both of that which immediately ſhineth from Heaven, and of that which glimmereth here below; he is the Fountain of all Truth, whether natural or ſupernatural: but his Light and his Truth he conveyeth into us by manners different; ſome Light ſtreameth directly from him, other cometh obliquely, being refracted through divers *mediums*, or reflected from ſeveral Objects upon us; the firſt ſort muſt needs be more bright, and more pure, ſhould be more powerful and efficacious upon our Minds: the latter is often blended with material Tinctures, is weakned by the interruptions it meeteth with, loſeth of its purity and its force by the many Conduits it paſſeth through, by the many Shades it mixeth with. Obſervations of Senſe do often prove fallacious, and their not ever doing ſo, dependeth upon divers Conditions, a right temper of the Organ, a fit diſpoſition of the *Medium*, a juſt diſtance of the Object; ſo that Concluſions derived from them cannot be ſo abſolutely certain, nor conſequently the Principles grounded on them: but Divine Revelation is not obnoxious to ſuch Conditions; as the Doctrines revealed are in themſelves ſimply true, according to the higheſt pitch of neceſſity, becauſe Supreme Wiſdom doth conceive them, and Truth it ſelf doth vent them; ſo the manner of declaring them muſt be competent, becauſe God himſelf doth chuſe, and uſe it; there plainly needeth no more, than yielding an attentive Ear, and skill in the Language wherein they are expreſſed, to ſecure us from Error, and uncertainty about them: So that well might St. *Auſtin* ſay, that *in other things our Conjecture is exerciſed; but Faith alone doth aſſure our Mind.*

Ad cætera exercemur per fortaſſe; at cùm de rebus fidei agitur, ibi eſt certè ſine fortè. Aug.

There have been thoſe, you know, who have not only advanced Doubts concerning Propoſitions atteſted to by cleareſt Senſe, and inferr'd by ſtrongeſt Diſcourſe; but have by their argute Cavillations bid fair to ſhake the Foundations of all Humane Science: but I never heard of any, who believed a God to be, that diſ[illegible]teſt the infallible Truth of his Oracles: *Socrates* we may be ſure (this excellent Scholar aſſuring us) who was ſo incredulous, as to diſclaim all pretence to Wiſdom or Science, being Author of the famous Saying, *Hoc tantùm ſcio*; yet greatly did rely upon Divine Significations, and Teſtimonies, ſo deemed by him, and ſuch as he could come at; alledging, that who followeth the Conduct of his own Reaſon, inſtead of God's Direction, chuſeth a blind and ignorant Guide, before one that beſt ſeeth, and knoweth the way: *He*, ſaith the * Hiſtorian, *deſpiſed all Humane Conceits in reſpect of God's Advice.*

Ἀπομν. α.

Αὐτὸς δὲ πάνυ ἀνθρωπίνα ὑπερεῖδε πρὸς τὰ παρὰ θεῶν ξυμβούλια.

He that formeth the eye (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *ſhall not he ſee? he that planted the ear, ſhall not he hear? he that teacheth man knowledg, ſhall not he know?* He that indued us with all our knowing Faculties, and preſideth over us in the management of them, ſhall not he ſupereminently know all that we can? muſt not they in reaſon continue ſubordinate to his Direction? Should they not always diſcern and judg under correction by him, with an appeal and ſubmiſſion reſerved to his better Judgment? Pſal. 94. 9.

I might adjoin, that the Object and the End (as well as the Author and the Manner) of Divine Revelation, doth argue it to ſurpaſs all Reaſon, and all Senſe, in certainty and credibility; for Senſe and Reaſon converſe wholly, or chiefly about Objects material and mutable; Revelation about immaterial and immutable things: They direct us in Affairs

Affairs concerning this Tranſitory Life. This leadeth us toward Eternal Felicity; to miſtake about thoſe Objects, to miſcarry in thoſe Affairs, is in it ſelf of little, in compariſon of no importance: but to judg rightly about theſe things, to tread ſafely in theſe paths, is of infinitely vaſt concernment; a ſmaller competency therefore of Light and certainty might well ſuffice to the purpoſes of Reaſon and Senſe, but to Faith the greateſt degree of aſſurance is worthily due, and ſeemeth requiſite. But farther,

6. Not only the conſideration of this Myſtery, but of all the Divine Attributes, will in like manner extort from our feeble Reaſon the
John 3. 9. Queſtion of *Nicodemus*, *How can theſe things be?* they will all of them equally puzzle our ſhallow Imagination, and baffle our ſlender Underſtanding: For who can imagine, or underſtand, how God's Immenſity doth conſiſt with his perfect Simplicity; or that without any parts he doth coexiſt to all poſſible extenſion of Matter; being all here, and wholly there, and immenſely every where? Who can apprehend his Indiviſible Eternity, or how all ſucceſſions of Time are ever preſent to him, and ſubject to his view; ſo that he is not older now than he was when the World began, nor younger than he will be after innumerable Ages are paſt; ſo that he foreſeeth the moſt contingent Events, depending upon Cauſes in their nature arbitrary and indeterminate? Who can fancy, how out of mere Nothing, or out of extreme Confuſion and Indiſpoſedneſs the World could be created, and framed into ſo goodly order, by a mere act of Will, or by the bare ſpeaking of a word? How without any diſtraction of thought he governeth Affairs, attending to the infinite varieties of Thoughts, Words, and
Confeſſ. 3. 11. Actions occurring here; and *ità curans univerſos tanquam ſingulos, ità ſingulos tanquam ſolos*, as St. *Auſtin* ſpeaketh? How he is truly ſaid to reſolve and to reverſe, to love and hate, to be pleaſed and grieved, all without any real change, or *ſhadow of alteration?* how he ſuffereth many things to happen, which extremely diſpleaſe him, and which he can eaſily hinder; and doth not effect many things, which are much deſired by him, and very feaſible to his Power? why to equal Men he diſtributeth his Gifts ſo unequally; affording to divers abundant means of becoming happy, leaving others deſtitute of them? What Wit of man can reconcile his infinite Benignity with his moſt ſevere Decrees; or compoſe the ſeeming differences between his Mercy and his Juſtice? Many ſuch Perfections and Diſpenſations of God we muſt ſtedfaſtly believe, becauſe they are plainly taught in Scripture; to diſtruſt them being to renounce Chriſtianity; to deny them being to raſe up the very foundations of our Religion: yet he that ſhall with his utmoſt attention of mind endeavour to conceive how they can be, or how they conſiſt together, according to our ordinary notions of things, and the vulgar meaning of words, applied by us to theſe inferior matters, ſhall find himſelf gravelled with innumerable ſemblances of contradiction, plung'd in depths inſcrutable, involved in Labyrinths inextricable.

What in practice the Croſs of Chriſt was, *a ſcandal to Jews* (men dull, but obſtinate, and invincibly poſſeſſed by vain Prejudices) and
Πλέον ἐστὶ τῶν ἀεὶ Μεσικῶν ἀμύσους, καὶ πολεμικῶν ἀσεβεύτους διαλέγεσθαι, τὸ τὰ θεῖα καὶ δαιμόνια πράγματα διασκοπεῖν ἀνθρώπους ὄντας, οἷον ἀτέχνως τεχνιτῶν διάνοιαν ἀπὸ δόξης καὶ διανοίας ἐπὶ τὸ εἰκοὶ μεθίοντας. Plut. *de ſera num. Vind.* *folly to Greeks* (men of wit and ſubtilty, but overweeningly conceited of them) that in Speculation may a great part of Divine Truths be,

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apt to ſtumble froward and arrogant Men; but as there, ſo here, *bleſſed are they who are not ſcandalized*; whom no fond Scruple, or haughty Conceit can pervert from readily embracing all neceſſary Verities; ſuch are thoſe we pointed at, which if without extreme folly and impiety we cannot reject, or be diffident of, altho ſurmounting our Conceit, and dazling our Reaſon; then upon the ſame account, with like facility, we muſt ſubmit our Faith to the Doctrines concerning the B. Trinity, ſtanding upon the ſame Authority.

7. Laſtly, We may conſider and meditate upon the total Incomprehenſibility of God in all things belonging to him; in his Nature, his Attributes, his Decrees, his Works and Ways; which all are full of depth, myſtery, and wonder. God *inhabiteth*, φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *a light inacceſſible* to the dim and weak ſight of mortal Eyes; which *no man hath ſeen, or can ſee: No man* (as he told his Servant *Moſes*) *can ſee his face* (the very exteriour appearance of him) *and live:* He is *a conſuming fire*, that will ſcorch, and devour ſuch as by raſh Inquiries approach too near him; *the ſight* ('tis ſaid) *of the glory of the Lord, was like devouring fire in the ſight of the children of Iſrael.* Even thoſe ſpiritual Eagles, the quick and ſtrong-ſighted Seraphims, are obliged to *cover their faces*, as not daring to look upon, nor able to ſuſtain the fulgour of his immediate preſence, the flaſhes of Glory and Majeſty iſſuing from his Throne: And the moſt illuminate Secretaries of Heaven, unto whom Secrets were diſcloſed, into which *Angels themſelves were ambitious to pry*, were ſometimes nonpluſt in contemplation of God's Attributes and Actions; being in their aſtoniſhment forced to cry out, ὦ βάθος· *O the depth of the riches of the wiſdom and knowledg of God!* Even his Methods of exterior Providence are inſcrutably Myſterious; *his judgments are* ἀνεξεδίητα, like inexhauſtible Mines, to the bottom whereof we cannot any wiſe dig by our inquiry; *his paths are* ἀνεξιχνίαστοι, ſo obſcure as not to be traced by any footſteps of our Diſcourſe; *his gifts are* ἀνεκδιήγητοι, not to be interpreted, or expreſſed by our Language. And if all concerning God be thus incomprehenſible, why ſhould any thing ſeem incredible? why out of ſo many unconceivable Myſteries do we chuſe ſome, reprobate others? wherefore do we ſtretch our Judgment beyond its limits to things ſo infinitely exceeding it? Why do we ſuffer our Reaſon to be pragmatical, unjuſtly invading the Office not belonging thereto; *intruding into things which it hath not ſeen*, nor can comprehend; thoſe *ſecret things which belong to the Lord our God*, and the comprehenſion whereof he hath reſerved unto himſelf?

Theſe Conſiderations may ſuffice in ſome manner to ſhew, that S. * *Chryſoſtom* had reaſon to exclaim ſo much againſt *the madneſs*, as he ſtileth it, of thoſe, who do πολυπραγμονεῖν τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, *are buſily curious in ſpeculation about the Eſſence of God*; daring, τοῖς οἰκείοις λογισμοῖς ὑποβάλλειν, *to ſubject Divine Myſteries to their own Ratiocinations*: that S. *Baſil*'s Advice was wholeſom, μὴ περιεργάζεσθαι τὰ σιωπώμενα, *not to be meddleſom about things, about which Holy Scripture is ſilent*: That another Antient Writer did ſay no leſs truly, than prettily,

Ἐι γὰρ αἰνομαὶ ἀκαταλήπτοι, πολλῷ μᾶλλον αὐτός. Chryſ. ἀκατ. α. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Exod. 33. 20. Deut. 4. 24. Exod. 24. 17. *Scrutator majeſtatis opprimetur à gloria.* Aug. Iſa. 6. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 12. Rom. 11. 33.

Τὶ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἀνίσταται πηλὸς ὤν; τί καὶ σὺ μετρεῖς τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸν ἐκεῖνον σπιθαμῇ, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν δράχμῃ; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26. 2 Cor. 9. 15.

Δόξη ἐστὶν ἀχώρητος, μεγέθει ἀκαταλήπτος, ὑψει ἀπερινόητος, σοφία ἀσυμβλήτου, ἀγαθωσύνη ἀμίμητος, καλοποιΐα ἀνεκδιήγητος. Theoph. *ad Autol.* Col. 2. 18. Deut. 29. 29.

* Μάνιαν γὰρ ἔγωγε εἶναι ἑκάτερον ἡμῖν φιλονεικεῖν εἰ δέναι τι τῶν ὄντων ἐστὶν ὁ θεός. Chryſ. περὶ ἀκατ. α.

Cogitemus ſi valemus, ſi non valemus credamus. Aug. *Serm.* 5. *de Temp.*

Τίς ἡ τοιαύτη ὑμῶν φιλονεικία ἢ ἐρεθρίσεων ὥστε ἀνθρωπίνῃ φρονήσει κατὰ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων νόησιν ὁρίζεσθαι; Athan. *T.* 1. 625.

† Zeno Veronenſ.

prettily, that in these matters *curiositas reum facit, non peritum*; we may easilier incur blame, than attain skill by nice inquiry into them: that many of the Fathers do with great wisdom dislike and dissuade the searching τὸ πῶς, the manner of things being true, or possible, as a suspicious Mark, or a dangerous Motive of Infidelity: that St. *Paul*'s Rules, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *to be wise so as withal to be sober*, and modest; and μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὁ γέγραπται, *not to conceit any thing without warrant of Scripture*; are in this Case most especially to be heeded: that, according to St. *Peter*'s Admonition, we should, *as new born babes* (unprepossessed with any Notions or Fancies of our own) *long for, and greedily suck in the sincere milk of the word*; not diluting it with baser Liquors of Humane Device: that where God doth interpose his definitive Sentence, our Reason hath nothing to do but to attend and submit; no right to vote, no licence to debate the matter; its Duty is to listen and approve whatever God speaketh, to read and subscribe to whatever he writeth; at least in any case it should be mute, or ready to follow *Job*, saying, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* In fine, The Testimony of God, with a sufficient clearness represented to the Capacity of an honest and docile Mind (void of all partial respects, and clear from all sorts of prejudice; loving Truth, and forward to entertain it; abhorring to wrest or wrack things, to use any fraud or violence upon any Principle, or ground of Truth) the Testimony of God, I say, so revealed, whatever exception our shallow Reason can thrust in, should absolutely convince our Judgments, and constrain our Faith. If the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us (that which also the uniform course of Nature, and the peaceable government of the World doth also speak) that there is but One True God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity the same August Names, the same Peculiar Characters, the same Divine Attributes (essential to the Deity) the same superlatively admirable Operations of Creation and Providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme Honours, Services, Praises and Acknowledgments to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our Minds, to stop our Mouths, to smother all Doubt and Dispute about this High and Holy Mystery. It was exceeding Goodness in God, that he would condescend so far to instruct us, to disclose so noble a Truth unto us, to enrich our Minds with that τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, that *most excellent knowledg of himself*; and it would be no small Ingratitude and Unworthiness in us any-wise to suspect his Word, or pervert his meaning; any-wise to subject his Venerable Oracles to our rude Canvases and Cavils. In fine, The proper employment of our Mind about these Mysteries, is not to search and speculate about them, to discourse flippantly and boldly about them; but with a pious Credulity to embrace them, with all humble Respect to adore them.

Σαφὴς ἔλεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς ἐστὶ θεῖ λέγειν. Expos. fid. apud *Just. M.*

Rom. 12. 3.

1 Cor. 4. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 2. Ἐπιποθεῖν.

Job 40. 4.

I have thus endeavoured in some measure to defend the Outworks of the Orthodox Doctrine concerning the Blessed Trinity; it was beside my intent to insist so long thereon, but the Matter did ἐφέλκεσθαι, was so attractive, that I could not wave shewing my Respect thereto.

I proceed now to that which I principally designed, the proposing briefly some practical Considerations, apt to excite us to the exercising our Understanding and Affections upon those wonderful Dispensations of Grace and Mercy, vouchsafed to us by the Holy Trinity, either conjunctly, or (as they κατ' οἰκονομίαν are expressed) separately.

We first should carefully study, and duly be affected with that gracious Consent, and (as it were) Confederacy of the Glorious Three in designing and prosecuting our good; their unanimons agreement in uttering those three mighty words of favour to Mankind, *Faciamus, Redimamus, Salvemus*, Let us make Man out of nothing, let us recover him from Sin and Perdition, let us crown him with Joy and Salvation; we should, with grateful Resentments, observe them conspiring to employ their Wisdom in contriving fit Means and Methods to exert their Power in effectual accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our Welfare, the rescue of us from all Misery, the advancing us to the highest degree of Dignity, and instating us in the most perfect Condition of Happiness of which our Nature is capable; in prosecution of that gracious Design, which their joint Goodness had projected for us. More distinctly,

1. We should set our Mind on God the Father, before the Foundation of the World from all Eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the Creation of us, and communication of his own Image to us; endowing us with most excellent Faculties of Body and Soul; subjecting the visible World to our use and governance; placing us in a state of great accommodation and delight; permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better Condition, resolving to send his own dear Son from his Bosom to procure and purchase the Redemption of Mankind; preparing and disposing the World for the reception of so great a Mercy, by a general testification of his Patience and Beneficence (*giving showers, and fruitful seasons*, and *filling the hearts of men with food and gladness*) but more especially by prophetical Promises, Predictions, and Prefigurations; also suffering the generality of Mankind so *to proceed in its ways*, as might render it sensible of its Error and Unhappiness, of the need and benefit of a Deliverance; then *in the fulness of time*, when *the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery*, actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with Humane Flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious Intentions toward us, might confirm the truth thereof by Miraculous Works, might instruct us by his Heavenly Doctrine and Holy Life in our Duty, and the Terms of our Salvation; then freely delivering him over unto Death, and accepting his Passion as a Sacrifice expiating our Sins, and meriting his Favour toward us: Then raising him as *the first fruits* from the Dead, setting him at his right Hand, investing him with Authority to govern and save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him; also sending and bestowing his Holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the ways of Truth and Righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent Passages of gracious Providence, ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with admiration of his Mercy; to be enflamed with love of his Goodness; to be possessed with gratitude toward him; to become thorowly devoted to his Service.

Act. 14. 17.

Gal. 4. 4.

Rom. 8. 22.

2. We ſhould likewiſe mind the Bleſſed Son of God concurring with his Father in all his purpoſes of Love and Mercy toward us, in *making all things*, and *ſuſtaining them by the word of his power*; but eſpecially in his (toward the freeing us from the deſperate Miſeries, Corruptions, and Slaveries, into which we were plunged) aſſuming Humane Nature, leading therein a troubleſom and toilſom Life, for our benefit and inſtruction; undergoing a bitter and ſhameful Death, for the atonement of our Sins, and reconciliation of us to Divine Favour; purchaſing great and precious Promiſes, procuring high and glorious Privileges for us; aſcending into Heaven to prepare us Manſions of Bliſs; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold Bleſſings upon us: the aſtoniſhing Miracles of Goodneſs, of Wiſdom, of Condeſcenſion and Patience, diſplayed in the management of which Undertakings for us, what Heart can well conceive, what Tongue can utter? What amazement ſhould it produce in us to conſider the brighteſt efflux of Divine Glory eclipſing and ſhrowding it ſelf under ſo dark a Cloud of Mortal Frailty; the moſt High ſtooping into the quality of ſo mean a Creature; the Firſt-born, and Heir Apparent of Heaven deſcending from his Throne of Eternal Majeſty, and voluntarily degrading himſelf into the *form of a ſervant*, clad in Rags, worn with labour and travel, expoſed to contempt and diſgrace? To reflect upon the great Creator and Sovereign Lord of all the World, who reared the Heavens, and founded the Earth, who poſſeſſeth and upholdeth all things, needing himſelf a Shelter, pinched with Want, taking Alms from his Slaves, and paying Tribute to his Subjects; to contemplate the Son of God willingly ſtiling himſelf the *Son of Man*, really ſubjecting himſelf to the Duties, the Neceſſities, the Infirmities of Humane Nature; ſuffering the coarſeſt Hardſhips, and extremeſt Diſaſters thereof; all this upon freeſt Choice, with full Contentment, and perfect Submiſſion to ſo mean and ſo diſtaſtful a Condition.

We may obſerve with how admirable Goodneſs he did vouchſafe to converſe with a froward Generation of Men, to inſtruct a ſtupid and indocile ſort of People, with all ſorts of Beneficence to oblige an Incredulous, Inſenſible, and Ingrateful Crew; with how invincible a Meekneſs and Patience he *endured the contradiction of ſinners*; the ſcornful Reproaches, the wrongful Calumnies, the ſpiteful and cruel Uſages of the envious and malicious World; being to the higheſt extremity deſpiſed, hated, maligned, and abuſed by thoſe whom he had moſt highly honoured, moſt affectionately loved, and conferred the greateſt Favours upon. We may with aſtoniſhment contemplate that ſtrange Conteſt between Divine Patience, and Humane Wickedneſs, ſtriving which of them ſhould excel; when we do peruſe and weigh thoſe enigmatical Paſſages, God accuſed by Man of Blaſphemy, the Eternal Wiſdom aſperſed with Folly, Truth it ſelf impleaded of Impoſture, eſſential Love made guilty of Miſchief, and ſupreme Goodneſs ſtiled a Malefactor; Infinite Power beat down, and trampled upon by Impotent Malice; the Judg of all the World, the Fountain of all Authority and Right, Arraigned, Condemned, and Executed for Injuſtice; the *deſire of all Nations* rejected by his own Country and Kindred; the Joy of Paradiſe (whoſe lightſom Countenance doth cheer Heaven it ſelf) almoſt overwhelmed with Grief, uttering lamentable Groans, tortured with grievous Agonies; the very Heart of God bleeding, and the ſole Author of Life expiring.

We may farther ſtudy Jeſus with a hearty Compaſſion, and Tears guſhing from his inmoſt Bowels, pitying not theſe his own Sufferings, but for the Vengeance for them due and decreed unto his Perſecutors; we ſhould mark him excuſing their Fault, and praying for their Pardon; dying willingly for their Good, when he died violently by their Hand; paſſionately deſiring their Salvation, when they maliciouſly procured his Deſtruction.

We ſhould mind all the Actions of the Son of God, our Saviour, with the moſt wiſe Grounds, endearing Circumſtances, and precious Fruits of them; his Birth, Life, Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Interceſſion; as containing Inſtances of the greateſt Charity and Humility poſſible ſhewed unto us, as Arguments of the greateſt Love and Gratitude due from us: Mind them we ſhould moſt ſeriouſly, ſo as to be heartily affected with them, ſo as to eſteem worthily the tranſcendent Honour done us by God aſſuming our Nature, and exalting us to a conjunction with the Divine Nature; ſo as to be deeply ſenſible of our Obligation to ſo immenſe a Charity, that could do and ſuffer ſo much for us, without any Deſert of ours, yea notwithſtanding our exceedingly bad Deſerts, our Rebellions and Enmities againſt him; ſo as to deteſt the heinouſneſs of our Sins, that needed ſo mighty an Expiation, that cauſed ſo horrid a Tragedy; ſo as not to neglect ſo great Salvation ſo frankly offered, ſo dearly purchaſed for us; not to fruſtrate the Deſigns of ſo unconceivable Love and Goodneſs, ſo as to obey readily ſo gracious a Maſter, to follow carefully ſo admirable an Example; ſo as in imitation of him, and for his ſake, to be meek, and humble in heart, and in deed, ſeeing he did ſo infinitely condeſcend and abaſe himſelf for us; to be patient and ſubmiſſive to his Will, who ſtooped ſo low, and ſuffered ſo much for us; ſo as to bear a general affection to Mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particular Intereſts, nor limited by any partial Reſpects, but extended freely, in real deſire and intention, toward all; liberally to impart the good things we poſſeſs, and patiently to brook the Croſſes we meet with, and heartily to forgive the Offences done to us; for that he freely did part with the greateſt Glories of Eternity, with the higheſt Dignities, and the richeſt Treaſures of Heaven for our ſake; when we were *enemies in our minds by wicked works, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, guilty of numberleſs grievous Offences againſt him, by his Blood redeeming us from Wrath, reconciling us to the Mercy and Favour of God.

3. We ſhould alſo meditate upon the Bleſſed Spirit of God, with equal Goodneſs conſpiring, and co-operating with all the Purpoſes, to all the Effects of Grace, which conduce to our everlaſting Happineſs; more eſpecially as the Repairer of our decayed Frames, the Enlivener of our dead Souls, the Infuſer of ſpiritual Light into our dark Minds, the Kindler of ſpiritual Warmth into our cold Hearts; the Raiſer of ſpiritual Appetite to Righteouſneſs, and the Reliſh of Goodneſs in our ſtupid Senſes; the Imparter of ſpiritual Strength and Vigour to our feeble Powers; the Author of all Liberty, looſing us from Captivity under the Tyranny of Satan, from Vaſſalage unto our own Carnal Luſts and Paſſions; from ſubjection to a hard and imperious Law, from bondage to the Terrors of a guilty Conſcience: As him, that enableth us to perform the Duties, and accompliſh the Conditions required of us in order to our Salvation, that qualifieth us to be the Sons of God by his effectual Grace, and aſſureth us that we are ſo by his comfortable

Teſtimo-

Teſtimony; as our ſure Guide in the ways of Truth and Virtue; our faithful Counſellor in all Doubts and Darkneſſes; our mighty Support and Succour in all Needs, in all Diſtreſſes; our ready Guard againſt all Aſſaults and Temptations; our ſweet Comforter in all Sadneſſes and Afflictions: Who doth inſinuate good Thoughts, doth kindle holy Deſires, doth cheriſh pious Reſolutions, doth further honeſt Endeavours in us: Who only doth inflame our Hearts with Devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth inable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit matter of requeſt, and becometh Advocate for the good ſucceſs of our Prayers.

We ſhould mind him as the Root of all good Fruits growing in us, or ſprouting from us; the Producer of all good Habits formed in us, the Aſſiſter of all good Works performed by us; the Spring of all true Content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the Faith, our continuing in Hope, our working in Charity, the purification of our Hearts, the mortification of our Luſts, the ſanctification of our Lives, the Salvation of our Souls are principally due, are moſt juſtly aſcribed: As the Author and Preſerver of ſo ineſtimable Benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us conſider him as condeſcending to be a loving Friend and conſtant Gueſt to ſo mean and unworthy Creatures; vouchſafing to attend over us, to converſe with us, to dwell in us, rendring our Souls holy Temples of his Divinity, Royal Thrones of his Majeſty, bright Orbs of his heavenly Light, pleaſant Paradiſes of his bliſful Preſence; our Souls, which naturally are profane Receptacles of wicked and impure Affections, dark Cells of falſe and fond Imaginations, cloſe Priſons of black and ſad Thoughts: As graciouſly *ſtriving with us*, ſtriving to open and enter into our Hearts, barr'd againſt him by vain Conceits, and vicious Inclinations; ſtriving to reclaim us from the Sins and Errors into which we are wont heedleſly or wilfully to precipitate our ſelves; ſtriving to make us, what in all duty and wiſdom we ſhould be, capable of Divine Favour, and fit for Everlaſting Happineſs: As enduring patiently manifold Diſpleaſures and Diſreſpects from us; our rude Oppoſitions againſt him, our frequent neglects of his kind Admonitions; our many perverſe Humours, wanton Freaks, wilful Miſcarriages, and unworthy Dealings toward him.

We ſhould thus mind the Bleſſed Spirit of God, and be ſutably affected toward him; ſo as to be duly ſenſible and thankful for thoſe unexpreſſible Gifts and Bleſſings indulged to us by him, ſo as to render all Love and Reverence, all Praiſe and Glory, all Obedience and Service to him, eſpecially ſo as to admit him cheerfully into our Hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earneſt Prayers; to make fit preparations for his Reception and Entertainment (by cleanſing our Hearts from all loathſom Impurities) to make him welcom, and treat him kindly, with all civil reſpect, with all humble obſervance; not *grieving* and vexing him by our diſtaſtful Croſneſs and Peeviſhneſs, not tempting him by our fond Preſumption, or baſe Treachery; not extinguiſhing his heavenly Light, and holy Fire by our foul Luſts, our damp Stupidities, our cold Neglects, our Neglects to foment and nouriſh them by the food of devout Meditations and zealous Deſires: So let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle Illapſes, to delight in his moſt pleaſant Society, to hearken to his faithful Suggeſtions, to comply with all his kindly Motions, to behave our ſelves modeſtly, conſiſtently, and officiouſly toward him.

* Thus

Thus ſhould we employ our Mind, all the Faculties of our Soul, our Underſtanding, our Will, our Affections upon the Bleſſed Trinity, the Supreme of all things above, the Founder of that Celeſtial Society, into which as Chriſtians we are inſerted; the Sovereign of that heavenly Kingdom to which we are Subjects; the Fountain of all the Good and Happineſs we can hope for in that ſuperior State. To the performance of which Duty there be Arguments and Inducementsinnumerable; 'tis the moſt proper and connatural Object of our Mind, that for which it is fitteſt, and for which it was deſigned; the beſt Intelligible, and infinitely moſt Amiable of all things. 'Tis the moſt worthy and noble Object, the contemplation of which, and affection whereto, will moſt elevate, moſt enrich, moſt adorn, moſt enlarge the Capacities, and moſt ſatisfy the Appetites of our Souls: 'Tis the moſt ſweet and pleaſant Object, wherein all Light, all Beauty, all Perfection do ſhine; the ſight and love of which do conſtitute Paradiſe, and beatify Heaven it ſelf. 'Tis the moſt uſeful and beneficial Object of our Mind, which will beſt inſtruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will moſt incite us to thoſe Duties which we are obliged to perform, will be moſt efficacious to the begetting in us thoſe Diſpoſitions, which are indiſpenſably requiſite for the attainment, and for the injoyment of that Everlaſting Bliſs; unto which that one Bleſſed Unity, and Glorious Trinity in its infinite Mercy bring us all: To whom be all Glory, Honour, and Praiſe for ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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